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MODERN ENTERNATIONAL DRUM MONTH D

The World's Most Widely Island Drum Magazine November '94

John Robinson

Yami's Charlie Adams

Joe Portaro

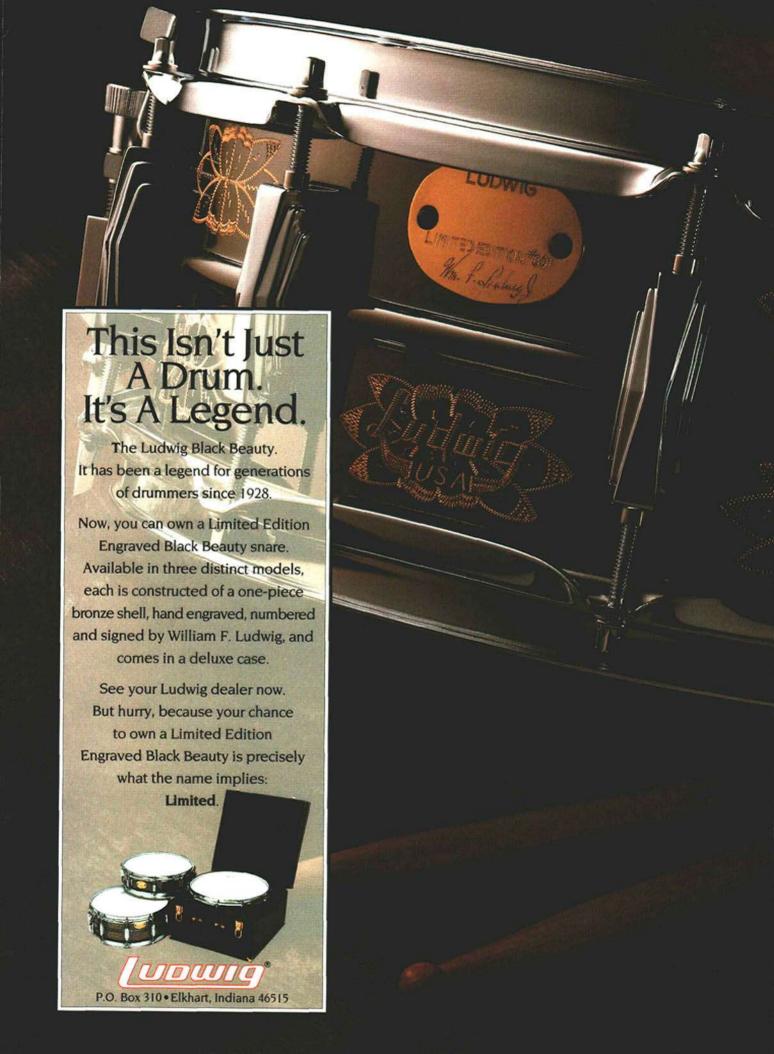
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· William F. Miller



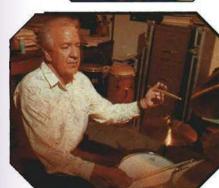


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A Reader Profile

A few months ago, we once again assigned an independent magazine research organization to conduct a survey to find out more about *MD* readers and their feelings about the magazine. A total of one thousand four-page questionnaires were mailed to a random selection of subscribers, and the responses were carefully tabulated. The resulting information will aid

us in keeping *Modern Drummer* as informative, entertaining, and conducive to your needs as possible. Here's some of what we learned.

Over 97% of *MD* readers are male, with an average age of 28.8 years. Our typical subscriber has been playing an average of 15.6 years, and claims to play 13.3 hours per week. Nearly 83% currently study—or have studied—with an instructor for an average of 4.9 years. Of those responding, 19% teach drumming, and over 75% of those who teach use *MD* as a teaching aid.

The highest percentage of MD subscribers (42.3%) are semi-professionals, while 33% consider themselves amateurs and 24.8% are full-time professionals. Close to 66% play in a band that works an average of 5.8 gigs monthly. The leading styles of music played are rock, blues/R&B, jazz, funk, alternative rock, metal, Top-40, fusion, country, and Latin, in that order. A moderate number of readers also reported an interest in timpani, Latin instruments, and mal-

let percussion. Over 82% of MD subscribers can read music.

Roughly 95% of the survey respondents are regular readers, and 89.3% have read all of the last four issues. Our average subscriber picks up an issue 11.2 times before finishing with it, and spends an average of 2 hours and 33 minutes with each issue. Respondents also refer to back issues an average of 9.9 times, and 96.3% save their copies for future reference.

When asked what they enjoyed most about MD, the three leading answers were product reviews, playing tips and techniques, and feature interviews. The balance of drumming artists interviewed in the magazine was considered excellent or good by 90% of those responding, and 72.3% claimed to have tried a new drumming technique or purchased new equipment (53.6%) as a direct result of an article or review in MD. Also highly rated were our technical articles, quality of writing, color photography, and the Sound Supplements.

Again, all of the information gathered will be thoroughly studied by *MD's*, editorial staff in an effort to continue to bring you the very best drumming magazine possible. My personal thanks to all of the survey participants who helped make this recent study one of the most successful ever.



modern **DRUMME**R

The World's Most Widely Read Drum Magazine

EDITOR/PUBLISHER ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER MANAGING EDITOR FEATURES EDITOR RONALD SPAGNARDI ISABEL SPAGNARDI

RICK VAN HORN

SEDITOR WILLIAM F. MILLER

ADAM J. BUDOFSKY

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

SUZANNE HURRING

ART DIRECTOR

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

SCOTT G. BIENSTOCK

ART ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER

LORI SPAGNARDI TRACY A. KEARNS

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CONTRIBUTING WRITERS: Robyn Flans, Burt Korall, Rick Mattingly, Ken Micallef, Matt Peiken, Teri Saccone, Robert Santelli, Robin Tolleson.

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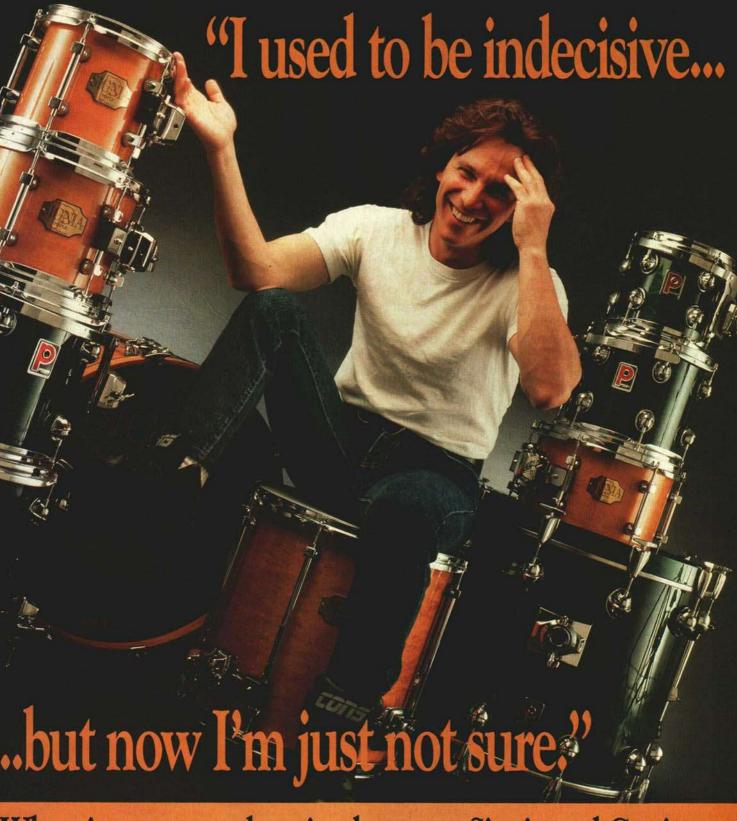
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Be sure to check out Rod on the new Dixie Dregs release "Full Circle."



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Readers' Platform



COMPLAINT DEPARTMENT

You probably won't print this, but I think your readers need to be educated—as I did. So here goes: What's happened to this great magazine? Since I only listen to artistic musicians and stay away from noise, I wasn't aware of who Pantera and Vinnie Paul were. But thanks to my daily viewing of the 700 *Club*, I'm now aware that they are a group of godless aberrations and a total disgrace to serious music, musicians, God, and this magazine.

How can a (once) respectable magazine justify publishing a cover article on such a drug-using freak? Paul is clearly stoned on the cover! "Do Sin," "Becoming," and "Strength Beyond Strength" are a sampling of Pantera's "songs" that glorify suicide, death, drugs, atheism, rape, and torture. I'm appalled at your lack of judgment and insight. God-loving Christian drummers are featured once in a blue moon, but you consistently feature godless, no-talent noisemakers. How sad. And what an insult to such serious and instructional artists as Billy Hart, Stan Lynch, Levon Helm, and Richie Hayward to have to share space with a talentless, godless, quarter-note wonder.

I love most of your magazine and find the interviews and regular departments on equipment and education invaluable. But this "article" on Vinnie Paul and other such (previous) articles are real stunners. What next—a cover article on the drummer for Nine Inch Nails (an even more repulsive "death metal" group)? I'm not impressed with this "new dimension."

I'm not perfect—just forgiven. But I do love God, life, women, and playing music. So why do I feel like a minority? God is not dead, and may He forgive their ignorance and stupidity.

Leonard Baker Red Banks, MS

I was thoroughly insulted when I got the July *Modern Drummer* in the mail. I can't believe that you could put a rap drummer [Cheron Moore] in such a respectable publication. Rap sucks. All it is is a bunch of drug-pushing fools cussing to a beat, brag-

ging about how many times in one night they can have unprotected sex, or boasting about how many "muthuf——s" they can "smoke" with their "gats." Furthermore, rap does not take the slightest bit of talent to play. It is not creative or inspiring. No one but the most amateur of drummers could have anything to learn from it.

The way I see it, the only possible motivation you could have to carry an article about a rap drummer is either to widen your sales margin or to give in to "politically correct" liberals who-in a misguided effort to appear non-racist—believe that excellence shouldn't matter and the only criteria for recognition should be one's social position. What they don't realize is that viewing social position (whether privileged or underprivileged) as more important than excellence or achievement is a form of racism. Even Martin Luther King, Jr. prayed for a day when "people will be judged not by the color of their skin but by the content of their character."

Rap is pointless, takes no talent, and helps no one. A decent drummer with good taste would never waste money or time listening to it or reading about it.

> Geoff Barrett Rockford, IL

I have been a subscriber for almost four years now, and although I enjoy your magazine, I must say I've become disappointed with regards to your choice of drummers to interview these past few issues. Why was it necessary to interview Neil Peart again? Sure, he's a wonderful drummer and I admire him-but there are other drummers out there. I'm also tired of reading about Seattle drummers. What could Dave Grohl possibly have to say that would further enhance any musician's career? And Vinnie Paul?! This guy has never played anything sensitive in his life. He is an unmusical drummer in an unmusical band. Why not interview someone who actually knows what he's talking about, like Carl Palmer, Phil Collins, Simon Phillips, or Alan White? Carl hasn't been interviewed in ten years, yet in that time you've covered Neil Peart three times and Lars Ulrich, Matt Cameron, and Charlie Benante twice—along with single stories on Fred Coury, Matt Sorum, Michael Cartellone, and Vikki Foxx! You should cover someone who can actually be of some benefit to your readers. I would hate to see this magazine succumb to following the fads and become the next *Rolling Stone*.

Aaron Rom Kentwood, MI

Editor's note: Every MD reader is, of course, completely entitled to his or her opinion regarding our selection of artists to cover in the magazine. (We do wonder whether Mr. Baker formed his opinion after actually listening to any of Vinnie Paul's playing, or rather embraced the opinions of others [such as the 700 Club] without doing his own research.) However, while some people may find the lyrical content of Pantera's material objectionable, the nature of their musicand of Vinnie Paul's drumming in particular—appeals to enough MD readers to have generated a significant number of requests for a story on Vinnie. None of those requests had anything whatever to do with the religious (or non-), philosophical, or moral positions represented by the band. Drummers were interested in Vinnie Paul as a drummer.

Over the past year or so we had also received substantial mail wondering why we were "ignoring" a major force in modern music: namely rap. Our response had always been that virtually all rap music employed drum machines rather than live drummers, so we had no one to interview. When it was brought to our attention that several real, live drummers—as represented by Cheron Moore—were making important inroads into the field, we felt it was time to acknowledge the genre.

Modern Drummer is sensitive to the various religious, moral, and social issues that—unfortunately—divide more and more people today. But we are not a mag-

BILL'S GOT THE RIGHT FEELING



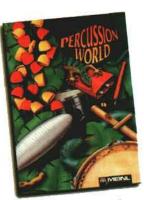
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Alan White

According to Alan White, Yes really broke some ground technologically on their newest LP, *Talk*. "We recorded all the drums live in the studio and then transferred them from analog to digital. Then we transferred that to hard disk so we could manipulate everything. You can take the whole kit and look at the live studio performance on the computer screen and change anything that you need to.

"I personally think this album is one of the best things the band has ever done," White goes on. "Every track sounds great from a rhythm section point of view. One of my favorite tracks is the last one on the album, 'Endless Dream.' It's a twentyminute piece, which this band is used to playing, but it has a very interesting first two minutes in 10/8 time, with lots of accents all over the place. It's a different kind of drumming piece, and then it goes into a very anthem-rock kind of thing at the end. 'State Of Play' has a kind of hiphop thing with a heavy rock backing to it, which is a different attitude rhythmically for something like that."

White adds that, as usual, the band paid a lot of attention to detail. "We played the music first," he explains, "and then went in and tore it to pieces and analyzed everything. We spent a lot of time making sure everything was in place. It took us about seventeen months to make the album."

Always the innovators, Yes has been trying something new on their current tour. "We carry our own FM radio station," Alan explains, "and people can either bring their own radios and earphones or rent them at the gig. If you're back on the lawn at some of these places and the sound isn't that great, you can put earphones on and hear perfect sound. It has a special delay so you can hear it as it is on stage, in time. It makes the concert more of an experience."

• Robyn Flans

Todd Turkisher

A year ago, Todd Turkisher might have been worried about getting directions to a wedding gig on Long Island, one of more than one thousand he estimates he's played over the past fifteen years. These days, however, the drummer for David Byrne has a somewhat broader itinerary. "We're going everywhere," he says, "South America, Europe, New Zealand, Australia, the Far East, and all over North America."

The thirty-three-year-old New Yorker is currently on tour with the Talking Heads' founder in support of Byrne's new self-titled Warner Bros. release, on which Turkisher plays all twelve tracks. "It's been an unbelievable ride for me, both professionally and musically," he says. "It's a perfect example of preparation meeting opportunity. If you're ready, you just take it and see where it goes."

Turkisher spent many years prepping for his big break, going back to when he was ten years old, picking up sticks for the first time at his cousin's bar mitzvah. He drummed his way through high school and college (Hofstra University), where he was a humanities major. From there, Todd studied with the best teachers he could find: Jim Chapin, Kenwood Dennard, Kirn Plainfield, and many others through New York's Drummers Collective. All the while he continued to work his way through the professional ranks, cutting his teeth with some of the more adventurous funk and fusion bands in the area as well as producing independent projects in his sixteen-track studio—and playing all those weddings.



After countless auditions over the years, Turkisher can say he's been turned down by some of the best: Spyro Gyra, Blood, Sweat & Tears, and Ann-Margaret, to name a few. So it came as a sweet surprise when he got the call to record and tour with Byrne, who's known for his quirky, eclectic musical style. "It was a real acknowledgment of everything I've been doing," says Turkisher, who augments his six-piece Mapex set with such percussive oddities as a boat propeller, a saw blade, and a Brazilian tambourine drum. "Someone finally heard what I was doing and said, 'Yeah, I like that."

· Jeffrey M. Davis



Michel Dorge

Michel Dorge was a Winnipeg, Canada session musician before hooking up with Crash Test Dummies in 1991. "Brad [Roberts, vocals and guitar] called me up to ask if I would join them for a showcase in the Cayman Islands," explains Dorge, "and I initially refused because I was committed to tour with another band. As soon as I hung up the phone with Brad, the other band's singer called to cancel that tour due to illness, so I immediately phoned Brad back and said that I would do it. I had such a good time with the Dummies that I told them I wanted to become a permanent member of the band."

Due to all the touring and popularity of *God Shuffled His Feet* (and the single "Mmm Mmm Mmm Mmm"), Dorge has abandoned the Winnipeg scene in favor of greener pastures. Michel

assures that there actually is a scene—however small—in Winnipeg. "It's mostly television, radio, and some jingle work, although it's really become scarce in the last few years. Now that I've moved on to other things, there are all these younger guys coming in, grabbing whatever work there is."

Dorge is not complaining about his situation, though. "I'd love to do more projects when I can fit them in around the Dummies. I still get called to do projects—I'm doing an album with Spirit Of The West, which I'm pretty excited about—but I make the Dummies my first priority. They've made me a full-fledged member, which is a really cool thing, so I return that with the gratitude of placing my loyalties with them first."

• Teri Saccone

Jeff McAllister

When guitarist Duke Robillard told drummer Jeff McAllister to lighten up,
McAllister thought his volume was hurting
Robillard's ears. "Being brought up in the
rock genre," the drummer says, "the name
of the game was playing as hard as you
could. But since I've been playing lighter
for Duke, the grooves seem to be falling
into place better."

McAllister can be heard on two recent Robillard albums: *Temptation*, released in April on Point Blank, and *Duke's Blues*, scheduled for U.S. release shortly.

While *Temptation* is rock-based and features heavier drumming, there are lighter

moments as well, such as "Rule The World," on which McAllister cut the basic track with *Blasticks* played on a bass drum case. "When we do the song live, I play a floor tom with a stick that has a maraca taped to it. That's something I have to credit Jim Keltner for, because he's who I want to be when I grow up," McAllister says, laughing.

McAllister is especially pleased with his lighter drumming on *Duke's Blues*. "I've learned a lot about shuffles from Duke, who has had a lot of experience with truegrit blues players like B.B. King, Muddy Waters, and Stevie Ray Vaughan,"

McAllister says. "Duke's gig is really widespread because he plays rock, swing, and five or six kinds of blues."

McAllister started working with Robillard two years ago when he was on break from guitarist Lonnie Mack's band. He's also gigged with original NRBQ guitarist Steve Ferguson. "When it comes to guitar players, I've led a charmed life," McAllister admits. "But working with Duke is the most fun I've ever had, and I hope it continues for a long time."

Rick Mattingly

News...

Ginger Baker has reunited with former Cream bandmate Jack Bruce to form BBM (with Gary Moore on guitar). Their new album, *Around The Next Dream*, has just been released.

Sue Hadjopoulos has been on tour with Kenny Loggins, playing dates and TV gigs on the east coast.

Moyes Lucas recently recorded the new Steve Perry album, *For The Love Of Strange Medicine*.

Michael Blair has been busy producing the Mole Session, the Traste Lindens Quintet, and On (with Malcolm McLaren). Michael can also be heard on the Violent Femmes' "Color Me Once," from the soundtrack to *The Crow*.

Former Blue Oyster Cult drummer **Albert Bouchard** has a new project out called the Brain Surgeons.

Ricky Fataar and percussionist **Debra Dobkin** are currently on the road with Bonnie Raitt.

Drummer **Steve Potts**, the nephew of the late Al Jackson, is currently on tour with

BookerT. &theMG's.

James Kottak has been touring with Warrant.

Alvino Bennett has been doing some live work with Jeffrey Osborne, Joshua Kadison, Ndugu Chancier and Patrice Rushen, and Michael Ruff. He can be heard on records by Gabrielle Andretti and Joshua Kadison's live singles "Invisible Man" and "Picture Postcards From L.A."

Jonathan Moffett is on tour with Janet Jackson.

Herman Mathews is on the road with Richard Marx.

Tony Braunagel on Chris Thomas's new LP.

Bruce Spencer has been gigging with Wynonna.

Simon Wright now touring with Rhino Bucket.

Tony Newman on the new Lee Clayton album.

Gerry Brown has been doing some dates with Stevie Wonder.

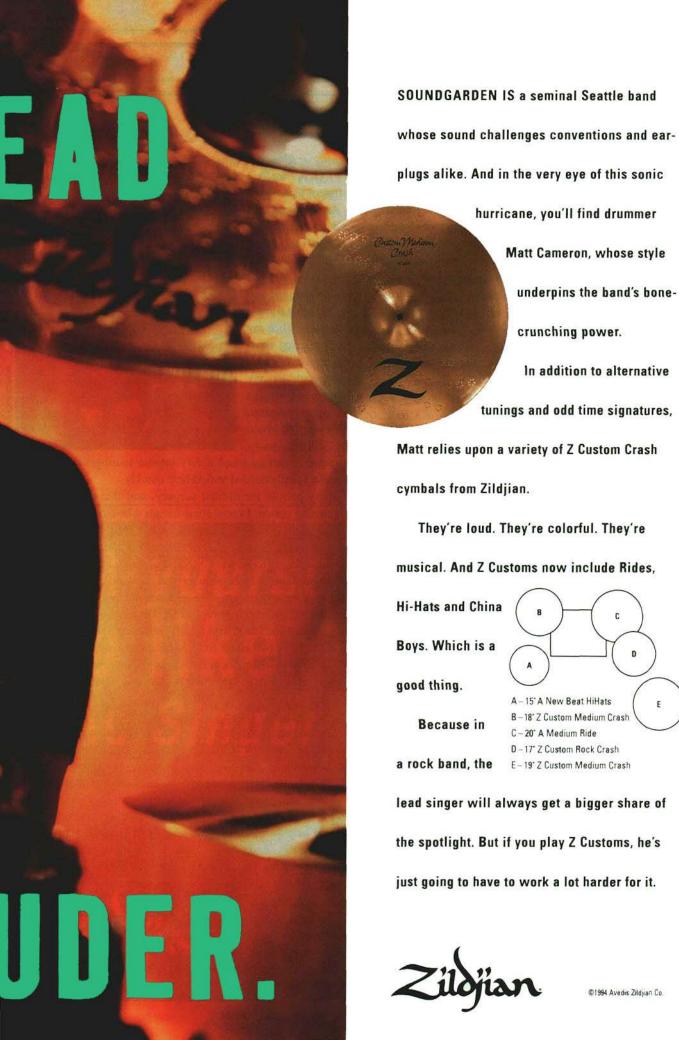
Russ Kunkel is touring with Stevie Nicks, with Lenny Castro on percussion.



MAKE THE L

SINGER

SCREAM LO





Dave Abbruzzese

Ever since I saw you with Pearl Jam on Saturday Night Live I have been amazed at your drumming—particularly with how fluid and relaxed you look when you play. I am also fascinated by your ability to accentuate your drum parts by using double strokes with your hands and 16th-note triplets on the bass drum. This leads me to my first question: Are there any specific exercises you did to develop your hand/foot technique? In addition, I have read that you suffer from carpal tunnel syndrome. How serious is this condition, and are there any preventive exercises for us drummers?

Tim Carter Columbia, SC

Thanks for the kind words, Tim. Now on to your questions.

As far as "specific exercises" that helped with my hand/foot technique, that's a really hard question to nail down. As you probably know, there are so many things in a young drummer's life that influence what he or she grows into musically. For me, the biggest influence was the music that I listened to. That was what drove me to expand myself into new areas and push my own limits. Back then I was just rockin' out, with no real thought of what or why, or how I was growing as a player. But because of the self-satisfaction I got from meeting my own challenges, I knew that I was on the right path.

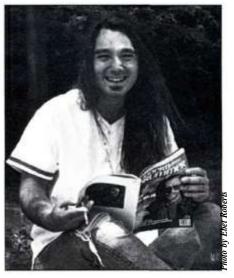
Then I started noticing different things about other players—such as the power in their playing, how they pulled back when it was musical to do so, etc. Noticing these things sparked within me all those "young drummer" questions—the most important of which was: Why? I started listening more to the *songs* than to the drums, and I realized that there is a lot more to drumming than blazing chops and cool hair. Melody, timing, and mood are things that make up an entire song, and these things are all created, enhanced—or ruined—by the drummer involved in them. I started trying to approach my drumming musically, rather than leading with my ego on the 1 and 3.

At the time of these discoveries I was playing original music and had just bought my first double pedal. Six weeks later, after a heated argument with the bass player about his unwillingness to put his foot on my by-now tortured pedal to help keep it from falling apart during a specific song, I threw it in the trash and vowed never to use one again. I spent the next year working very hard to get my right foot to do everything that I had been doing with both feet on the double pedal. Being such a big fan of John Bonham, I already had a big start on my right foot responding to the thoughts in my head. From that point on, once again the music led me on.

The style of playing that comes out of me with Pearl Jam is what I feel to the music. If I were to play different music, it might be judged as a different technique. But it would only be a differ-

ent feel, not really a different technique.

As for your second question: Yes, I do suffer from carpal tunnel syndrome, as well as tendon damage and the occasional muscle strain. When my problems first started I read everything that I could get my hands on. I was, as you can imagine, very worried about my future as a



drummer. Pearl Jam had a very intense touring schedule at the time, so I really needed to find help quickly.

Many people mentioned surgery, and that—to me—was a frightening option. I know some friends who have been helped by surgery, and I also know people who haven't. So I decided to keep checking out my options. Eventually, with the help of Dr. Sharon Zadonoff and Max Weinberg, I was able to manage my condition enough to be able to play two-and-a-half-hour shows with minimal difficulties. The treatment for my problem had two parts: Part one was provided by Dr. Sharon, and involved acupuncture and herbs with a daily intake of 200 to 300mg of vitamin B6. Part two came from Max: ibuprofen before playing to help with the swelling, a before-show warm-up with heating pads for twenty minutes and sticks on a practice pad, and icing the problem area immediately after the show for fifteen minutes to reduce swelling. These practices really have helped me, but I have heard of other things from other people as well, so I always suggest seeking the help of a physician or alternative medical practitioner.

The biggest "tips" I can give to help prevent these kinds of problems are: 1) Be aware of your body. If you feel pain, back off. "No pain, no gain" is untrue. 2) Be as comfortable and relaxed as possible when you play. You can be aggressive and relaxed at the same time. 3) Don't wait until your little problems are big problems. If you're in pain, try to find the source and take action. 4) Most of all, make every attempt to stretch and warm up before you play.

When we're young, it seems as though our bodies can handle anything. As we get older, we get stiffer. If we don't help our bodies maintain themselves, they grow old and then we have to fight to express ourselves physically. So take care, Tim, and enjoy it all.

Prairie Prince

I recently caught your show with the Tubes here in New Britain, Connecticut. I was extremely impressed with both the band and your playing. Since I last saw you play you seem to have elevated your drumming to another level. Could you tell me what process you took yourself through to get there? Also, the band seems to have a harder, heavier sound. Was this a conscious decision, and if so, why? Lastly, after leaving the show and listening to my ears ring for hours afterward, I wondered what, if any, precautions you take to protect your ears during the shows.

James Bruno New Britain, CT In answer to your question about elevating levels in drumming, I'd have to say that constant playing with as many musicians as possible gives one forward progress in the pursuit of commanding one's instrument. You need to keep your mind open to versatility in drumming. Experiment with different styles and rhythms, studying the roots and where the grooves themselves developed.

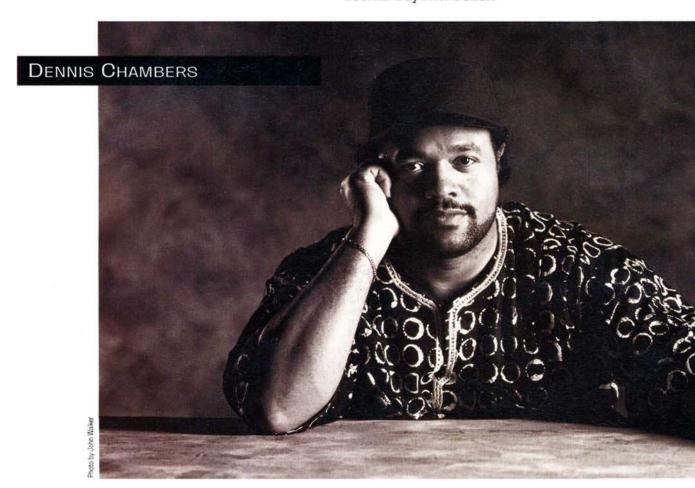
I don't know when the last time you saw the Tubes was, but I've been performing quite a lot since our last full-blown tour in 1985. Since then I've played on tour and in the studio with Todd Rundgren, Jefferson Starship, Chris Isaak, XTC, Dick Dale, and, of course, various incarnations of the Tubes. Only recently has [vocalist] Fee Waybill returned to the

band. Our new guitarist/keyboardist, Gary Cambra, is partly responsible for taking the band's musical direction more towards the thrash/funk, heavier sound that you commented on. I'm also a fan of bands like Primus, Mr. Bungle, Frank Black, Nine Inch Nails, Pantera, etc. So the difference in my drumming direction is partly from banging my head.

Speaking of head, as far as ringing in the ears is concerned, if you don't like the ringing you're in the wrong business—unfortunately. However, if you want to protect your ears as much as possible, there is a clinic in San Francisco called H.E.A.R. [(415) 441-9081] that will custom-fit earplugs for you. I use them, especially when I'm in front of the P.A. system in the audience! Good luck!



There are a few players that need absolutely no introduction. Their talent transcends the normal boundaries of musical preference. To watch them perform is an event. Dennis Chambers is one of these rare individuals whose sheer ability behind a drumset seems beyond belief.



Millions of people will see Dennis perform this year as he tours with Steely Dan. Thousands of drummers will come to see one of the best in the world, a true legend in the making. A player like Dennis could search and find the best sounding drumset available, at any price. The Masters Series from Pearl...like nothing you've heard before.





The Masters Series now features PowerStroke 3' bass drum heads, exclusive stainless steel hoops and exciting new semi-transparent finishes including Sapphire Sunburst shown above. See your local Pearl dealer for more info or write to; Pearl Corporation, Masters Catalog, 549 Metroplex Dr., Nashville, TN 37211. Please enclose \$3 shipping/l....elling.

It's Questionable



Monitor Earplugs

I'm fifteen years old and have been playing drums and percussion since I was five. I am experiencing mild to medium hearing loss and tinnitus. More than the ringing in my ears, I am experiencing a pain or throbbing. It often feels like I have cotton in my ears. I feel that the most substantial problem is my practice configuration. I practice with my stereo, but in order to hear the music over my drums I have to turn the stereo (via Sony *CD-450* earphones) substantially louder. My hope is to find a pair of earphones that have substantial noise reduction to the sound outside. If this was possible I could turn the volume down on my earphones, thus drastically reducing the sound in my ears and my hearing loss and damage. To date I have only seen the Bose Aviation Headphones that Peter Erskine recommended in a recent issue of MD. But they cost around \$1,000. Can you offer a more cost-conscious option?

Jonathan Simon Miami, FL

Experiencing noticeable hearing loss and ear pain at the age of fifteen is a serious situation that calls for examination by a medical specialist. Noise reduction alone may not be sufficient; you may have an acute sensitivity or some other problem that should be addressed. You have many more productive years ahead of you; you certainly are going to want to go through them with your hearing capacities intact.

When it comes to practicing with recorded music, we can recommend the *ER-4 Canal Phones*, by Etymotic Research (reviewed in the November '93 *MD*). They are audiophile-quality earphones built into soft plastic ear inserts. The inserts serve as earplugs that effectively block out a large percentage of ambient noise. The result is just what you're looking for: the ability to turn down the level of the incoming sound and still hear it clearly over the sound of the drums. They aren't cheap, but at around \$330 a set they're a good deal less expensive than

the Bose headphones you mentioned. Contact the manufacturer at 61 Martin Lane, Elk Grove Village, IL 60007, (708) 228-0006.

Dented Drumheads

I'm a beginning drummer and I seem to be a little bit too vigorous with my toms. I have a habit of putting dents into my Remo *Pinstripes*. Consequently when I re-tune my heads after use, they've raised in pitch. Additionally, I can't seem to keep my toms nice and low. I'm wondering if the higher pitch is from the dented heads, or from some other factor. Can you tell me how to prevent the cratered heads and the resulting higher-pitched toms?

Kevin Korper Conway, AZ

Obviously if you play very hard, it makes sense to use heavy-duty heads designed for that purpose. *Pinstripes* certainly qualify, but you may want to experiment with other high-impact heads available from all of the major head manufacturers. But *any* heads can suffer dents if they are played before they are properly seated or while they are tuned too loosely (or both).

Visualize a drumhead as a trampoline. When you jump on a trampoline, the entire surface depresses—not just the point at which your feet touch. The same effect should happen with a drumhead. However, when the head is not seated properly or is tuned too loosely, the force at the point of stick impact is not distributed evenly across the head. Instead, the head material "gives" just at that impact point—resulting in a dent.

Properly seating a drumhead is a simple matter of stretching it out when you first put it on the drum, so that you "take up the slack" that exists in the head material and its bond to the drumhead hoop. This can be accomplished easily in one of two ways. One way is to put the head on the drum (while the drum is on the floor), tighten the lugs up to a normal playing

tension, and then kneel or sit on the head. This stretches out the head material and also tightens it up against its epoxy bond to the hoop. (You'll generally hear some "cracking" as this happens.) Once this stretching has taken place, you can then re-tighten the lugs and tune the drum.

If you don't want to remove the drum from the kit when you replace a head, then use the tension rods to tighten the new head well beyond its normal playing tension. (Again, you should hear the cracking of the epoxy.) Then back the tension off substantially and re-tune the drum.

You mentioned that you can't seem to get the low pitch you want from your toms. This leads us to suspect that your drumhead dents are very likely the result of your tensioning the heads too loosely in your attempt to get those low pitches. Remember that any drum/drumhead combination has an optimum pitch range, depending on the size of the drum and the nature of the head. In some cases, if you want a bigger, deeper drum sound you simply need to get a bigger, deeper drum.

Jethro Tull Drummer

Can you tell me the title of the very first Jethro Tull album, and the name of the drummer who played on it?

Phillip Burdick Corcoran, CA

The album was called *This Was*. The drummer was Clive Bunker, who was a member of the group from 1967 until 1972. He also played on Tull's *Stand Up, Benefit, Living In The Past*, and *Aqualung* albums.

Switching From Sticks To Brushes

I've always wanted to know: How do jazz drummers switch from sticks to brushes in the middle of a song, with no pause?

Greg Brashear Cincinnati, OH

continued on page 64

It's what you can't see that sounds so good to "J.R."

Now, an affordable *complete* trigger system for acoustic drums. Sound technology that you can barely see!

J5000 Tom Trigger

- Nothing touches your drum heads
- Maintains natural drum sound
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John "J.R." Robinson

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John Robinson



GoingForTheThroat



By William F. Miller

Photos by Ebet Roberts

Robinson, it may be something even more—his credo. When he's sitting behind a drumkit in a studio and it's time to record, J.R. goes for the throat—it's a combination of total focus and no-apologies confidence. Sure, he gets an amazing recorded sound, he's an expert reader, and he can play a groove a mile wide. But it's that mindset, that *attitude*, that has kept him at the absolute top of the L.A. studio scene for the past fifteen years.

Check out these stats: Robinson's played on records selling more than 250 million units; performed on over twenty- five

Grammy winning albums; recorded more hit singles than any other drummer (reportedly even surpassing '60s studio legend Hal Blaine); recorded hundreds of commercials, television shows, and movie soundtracks. And the list of artists he's recorded with is just plain *scary*, including such stars as Michael Jackson, Eric Clapton, Elton John, Michael

"What I play doesn't have to be perfect; it just has to enhance the song."

Bolton, Whitney Houston, Steve Winwood, Lionel Richie, Vince Gill, and Madonna.

The path to success for J.R. was more like an express train. Back in 1978, while playing in a show band in the midwest, Robinson was spotted by Chaka Khan and members of Rufus. They dug his playing and asked him to join the group. He recorded their *Numbers* and *Masterjam* albums, the latter produced by Quincy Jones. Quincy was so knocked out by J.R.'s playing that the producer invited him to record Michael Jackson's *Off The Wall* album. The blockbuster success of that release put J.R. on the studio map, and he hasn't slowed down since.

A rather odd occurrence happened earlier this year: Robinson went on the road. He actually gave up some studio calls, making time in his schedule to tour with Barbra Streisand. The chance to perform top-notch arrangements with a sixty-five piece orchestra in a setting where "no expense was spared" coaxed John out into the light. The much-ballyhooed tour was undeniably the major musical event of the summer, earning the superstar singer over 100 million dollars.

So what is it about this guy's drumming that makes so many artists crave his services? What does he bring to a track that makes a song greater than it is? What is it that he has? It must be that attitude.

WFM: You're known as the "human clock" on the L.A. studio scene. When it comes to time and feel, you're the man. Can you suggest anything to help drummers improve their time?

JR: Just about anybody can sit down with a metronome and develop "perfect" metronomic time, but that's not really what makes good music. What it comes down to is an individual's inner clock—a person's perception of time and groove.

No two drummers have the same feel, and that's the beauty of it. If everybody did, music would be very boring. I think drummers should develop their ability to play "even" time, but not become a slave to that notion. Let your personality come through.

I tell this story occasionally: When I was a little boy I can

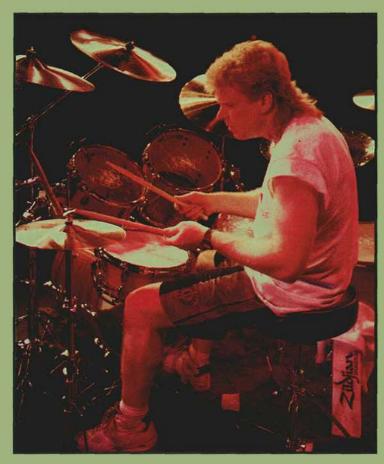
remember laying in bed at night and feeling my heart beat. I used to get really freaked out about it, but because of it I became aware of time, of pulse. When I started playing drums at about age seven, I think I picked up on that idea of pulse. The concept of time was something that I had a grasp of early on

WFM: When you're playing time, do you focus on any particular limb?

JR: Occasionally I'll focus on my right foot. I believe one of the keys to grooving is your bass drum. I'll also focus on the right hand, depending on what type of ride pattern I'm playing. And there are times when I don't focus on anything—I just kind of go on autopilot.

WFM: When a drummer plays time, there are dynamic rela-





tionships between the hi-hat, snare, and bass drum. That will change depending on what style you're playing, but have you found a certain "balance" you like to have when playing a groove?

JR: In a general sense there are dynamic relationships between the different voices, although I can't say it's something I consciously think about. If I were to look at it that way, though, I suppose I build from the bottom up: If the bass drum would be, *say*, *forte*, the snare drum would be slightly less, and the hi-hat would be just under that, around *mezzo forte*. This will change with different grooves and styles, but for a general guideline that might work.

WFM: Another aspect of your drumming, which I'm sure plays a big part in your ability to groove, is how fluid your motions are. How much thought do you give to your arm and body movement when you're playing?

JR: I try to stay as loose as possible. I remember when I first joined Rufus and Chaka Khan—my first big gig—I would occasionally tense up mentally, which would cause me to tense up physically. Then my muscles would get tight and I couldn't be fluid. The whole point is to stay as relaxed as possible, both mentally and physically.

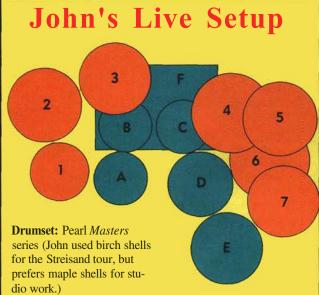
I remember when I was very young, before I studied with any teachers, playing with the same type of motion I use now. And then, when I finally started studying with Ed Soph, I had that looseness in myplaying. Hetaught methat the stick should an extension of your arm—it should move in a natural manner. And I think that just reinforced this idea of flow.

WFM: Getting back to playing time, I've heard drummers dis-

cuss note alignment For instance, some drummers will play a straight rock beat where the backbeat snare drum notes will be slightly behind the 8th-note hi-hat notes, this all done to give a certain feel to the groove. Do you have any thoughts on this concept, and is it something you apply?

JR: I've heard of that but I don't do it. Any notes that I play within a pattern that I want to play together all hit at the same time, but the *position* of that place in time is what I'm controlling. I think I do this differently if not more accurately than most drummers. It's one of the things I do best.

Normally my bass drum is directly on the beat, all the time. What I do is adjust the notes around the bass drum. There were times when I first joined Rufus when Bobby Watson, the bass player, would say, "John, lay back on the snare drum just



A. 6 1/2 x 14 snare drum (brass or maple)

B. 11 x 13 tom

C. 12 x 14 tom

D. 16 x 16 floor tom

E. 16 x 18 floor tom

F. 16 x 24 bass drum

Cymbals: Zildjian

1. 15" A *Quick Beat* hi-hats

2. 20" A thin crash

3. 19" K China

4. 22" K heavy ride

5. 20" K flat ride with three rivets

6. 22" A swish with twenty rivets

7. 18" A thin crash

Hardware: Pearl hi-hat and cymbal stands, Engineered Percussion's *Axis* bass drum pedal with Danmar *JR* model beater (square wood)

Heads: Remo custom Emperor on snare batter (coated with thin dot on outside), coated Emperors on tops of toms, clear Ambassadors on bottoms, Powerstroke 3 on bass drum batter (Moleskin attached to impact point) with Ambassador on front

Sticks: Zildjian *JR* model with wood tip

Electronics: Samson twenty-two-input mixer, Ensoniq and Alesis gear in rack, Audio-Technica *ATM-25* bass drum mic', Mystique Sound Solutions 7-5000 tom-tom triggers, 7-2000 trigger snake, 7-7000 kick drum trigger

a little bit." I'd adjust it immediately. And I found that it would work on that particular song. I learned how to lean back on the time without slowing down.

Normally I play everything consistently. I learned how to lay things back—not individual notes as you mention, but the

99Reasons

a sampling of the stars who've employed JR

Michael Jackson Steve Winwood Lionel Richie **BobSeger Dionne Warwick** Whitney Houston **Quincy Jones** Kenny Rogers Julio Iglesias **Pointer Sisters** Diana Ross John Fogerty David Lee Roth Glenn Frey The Temptations George Benson Natalie Cole Patti Austin Patti LaBelle Melissa Manchester Kenny Loggins Jermaine Jackson **Christopher Cross** James Ingram Michael McDonald The Four Tops **Barry Manilow Smokey Robinson** Eddie Rabbitt Jeffrey Osborne **Barbra Streisand** Stanley Clarke George Duke Frankie Valli **Neil Diamond** Seraio Mendes **Herb Alpert Larry Carlton Bob James David Sanborn** Stephen Stills Crystal Gayle Paul Anka Placido Domingo Stevie Nicks

Manhattan Transfer **Eric Clapton Edgar Winter** Jon Anderson **Eddie Murphy** Joan Baez **Burt Bacharach** Earth. Wind & Fire Ruben Blades Chicago Crusaders **Peter Cetera** Peter Frampton Sheena Easton Al Jarreau Joe Sample Madonna Richard Marx Robbie Robertson Wilson/Phillips **Starship** Rickie Lee Jones **BJThomas Rod Stewart** Rita Coolidge Hiroshima Seal Fee Waybill **Dion Dan Hill Jennifer Warnes** Ray Charles Celine Dion Tom Jones **Tevin Campbell** Michael Bolton Michael Feinstein Dave Koz Michael Franks **David Clayton Thomas Felix Cavaliere** Ben E. King The Winans Teena Maria Vince Gill Jennifer Holiday Peabo Bryson **Grover Washington Eddie Money**

entire groove. I'll lay the entire ninety yards back, but the bass drum will still be on time. It's a question of an entire bar, or maybe even a two-bar pattern, which is pulled back over that exact given period of time.

WFM: How do you develop that ability to lay back without slowing down or losing the intensity?

JR: A lot of it has to do with just being aware of what you want to do with the groove. It's an easy concept to understand, once you realize it's an option. Think of time as something that's elastic, not rigid, and you should be able to do it. That's what really separates us from drum machines.

WFM: Playing good time also involves interacting with other musicians. What can we do as drummers to help other bandmembers lock in with us and with each other?

JR: Well, you might think that playing louder would let the other musicians hear the time better and help them lock in with each other. But I've found that to be exactly the opposite of what works. Try playing lighter. Let the groove happen naturally. It sharpens everyone's focus.

WFM: Another problem drummers often have involves keeping the intensity of the groove while playing fills. What's the best way for a drummer to internalize the time so that when he or she plays a fill it's right in the pocket?

JR: I think the first thing to do is not play a fill at all—leave some space! That's the first step. Once you realize what's missing in that space, you'll automatically know what fill to play.

It's hard to sit and practice all sorts of cool fills, and then *not* use them when you're playing with a band. And most drummers probably spend more time on fills than they should. It's fun to be able to play those things, but most of the time I've found that they don't make the song any better. I like fills that come naturally—not forced. If you play that way, your fills should be in time. And again, relaxation is the key.

To give you an idea as to the importance of fills to a song, on *The Dude*, Quincy Jones' six-Grammy-winning album that I did with him in 1982, I didn't use any toms. I remember coming to the session expecting to have my regular kit there waiting for me. When I got to the studio, [guitarist] Steve Lukather was laughing at my drumset. He asked me, "Where's your drums? Hah, hah, hah." I noticed that all of the toms and cymbals were removed from my set. So I asked the engineer what was up, and he said that Quincy didn't want any toms on this record. So I played on a multi-Grammy-winning record with just three pieces!

That taught me a lesson. Quincy's theory was that toms get in the way of the track. In a way that's an anti-drummer statement, but you have to look at it from a producer's point of view. Sometimes *not* playing a fill can say more than playing one.

WFM: Earlier you touched on playing behind the beat, and I think just about everybody understands what that means. But what types of tilings are you thinking about when you're presented with a track and the producer says, "Let's play behind the beat on this"?

JR: A lot of what I do now involves going in and adding drums to something that's almost finished, and I'm replacing

Herbie Hancock

Steve Perry

Elton John

Gladys Knight

Johnny Mathis

either another drummer or a programmed part. They'll play the song for me and point out different sections where they want the time to lay back a bit or move ahead. Normally you can hear it on the track. If there's a click that the band played to, I might listen to it, but then again I might not. Essentially I listen to a track and quickly analyze it, taking notes on the different sections. I'll add my notes to the chart, and then we'll do a take.

WFM: How do you feel about coming in at that point of the recording process?

JR: If I'm replacing somebody, I never want to hear what that person played because it will totally alter my perception of the song. I just want to hear the song, and then I'll have a concept of what to play.

I'll go out and make an attempt I always insist engineers not tweak knobs - When I'm doing a first take because usually first takes, even if they may not be perfect, have so much magic in them. I feel that there's stuff that comes out on that first take that you can never get again. I can't explain it It's just something that happens. So I'm going for the throat on the first one, always.

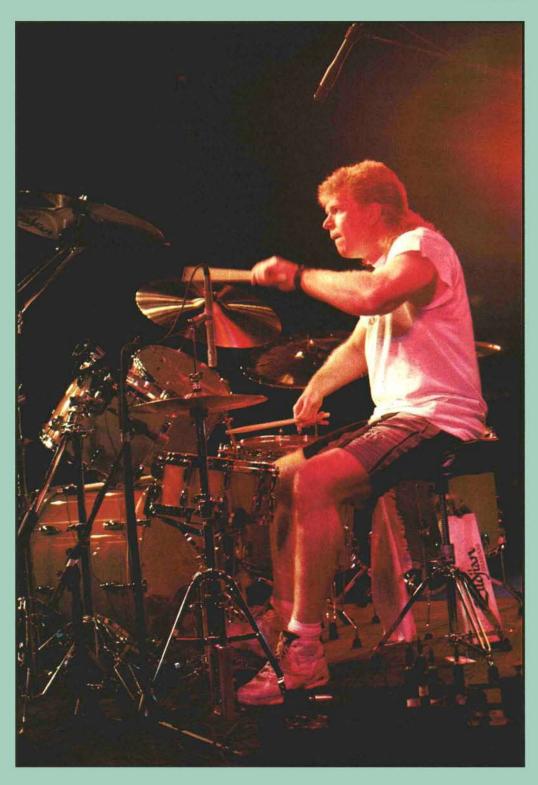
WFM: When you're in that situation where everything else is done, I would imagine there's more pressure because the focus is on you. **JR:** Exactly. And in that situation they occasionally do something I call "tweezing." Some guys will tweeze you to death. It goes like this: You'll do a good first take, then they'll want you to do maybe a second or third. Then they'll say something like, "Okay, we want to fix this one now." So they go to the top and they listen, "Oops, did you hew that one note? Let's punch in that beat only." And then they really start tweezing, like a doctor

doing surgery with those quadra-focals on. They really start dissecting what you played, and nine times out of ten they have *no idea* what drums are about.

WFM: When you're adding live drums to a track you can obviously have big affect on the groove. I suppose you could phrase the rhythm from a very tight, straight feel to something that's more swung. Do you experiment with *degrees* of feel?

JR: Instead of saying, "Well, I think I'll play this song some-

continued on page 66





YANNI'S

CHARLE ARAMS

SLAMMING THE NOTION OF "NEW AGE"

t the foothills of the Acropolis, near the base of the Parthenon, in the historic Herod Atticus Theatre, a performance experience of a lifetime was about to commence. There awaited a symphony orchestra, poised and ready to play. There was also one of the most innovative six-piece bands in the world. And there, behind a massive "orchestral drumkit," sat Charlie Adams, one of today's most versatile drummers.

The reason all these musicians were assembled in this near-mythical Greek setting was a special series of concerts welcoming home a native son, composer/musician Yanni. Charlie Adams and Yanni have been performing together for over fifteen years, since their first collaboration together in the rock 'n' roll band Chameleon, in Minneapolis. The concerts were a culmination of sorts for these two musicians, who have been making a unique style of music together—a blending of rhythms and melodies in a very contemporary, instrumental way.

The Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra from London, England, under the direction of Shardad Rohani, swelled through momentous *crescendos* and hushed to quiet moments, but always there were the rhythms—dancing, dri-



ving, dynamically moving the music forward. The multiple time signatures that Yanni's music is famous for seemed not to be "odd" meters at all, but rather a toe-tapping musical force.

Besides the fortunate audience members who were in Greece for those fabulous concerts in late 1993, millions of viewers saw the event broadcast over PBS Stations beginning in the spring of this year. And millions more purchased a videocassette and compact disc of this historic concert,-pushing it toward the top of the *Billboard* charts. Hundreds of thousands more packed concert halls across this country during the summer to hear the music come alive as the huge ensemble toured the United States, performing sixty-one concerts in fifty cities.

Once thought of as "new age"—even looked down on by "real drummers"—Yanni's music has become hugely successful in the mainstream pop field. And for those who listen closely, it is the rhythms behind the melodies that make this music "dance." And Charlie Adams is the man behind the rhythms.

By Lauren Vogel Weiss

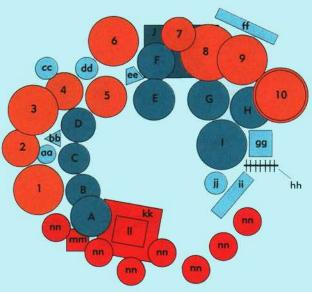
Photos by Ebet Roberts

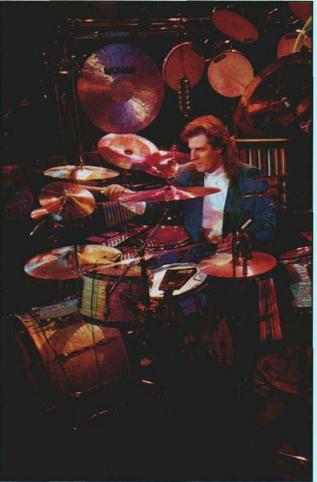
What did Adams think of the *Live At The Acropolis* concert? "It was great playing with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra," Charlie replies. "It was so historic. You saw all the Greek ruins and could imagine that thousands of years ago plays and concerts were held there. From where I sat behind the drums, I could look up and see the Parthenon all lit up. It was a full moon and I could see all the people looking at us. It was so cool! It was a really magnificent theater."

One of the high points of the concerts-at least from a percussive standpoint—was Charlie's drum solo in the song "Marching Season." Besides displaying an incredible amount of drumming technique, Adams incorporated an equal amount of showmanship. Although they had performed the song on a previous Yanni tour, this was a new experience for him. "That drum solo was new because it was played on the orchestral kit—the one that includes multiple toms, snares, percussion, cymbals, and gongs," he explains. "I actually prefer soloing on a four-piece set. On our last tour I had a little four-piece drumset, along with my large setup. It's an old Gene Krupatype. The crew would wheel it out down front where Yanni and I would play Marching Season. I did my solo down there. To tell you the truth, I preferred the simplicity of just playing on a basic set as opposed to what we did in Athens. But there wasn't room there for both sets.

"I always enjoyed drummers who not only had technique, but who also had personality; those who considered themselves not only a musician, but an entertainer.

Charlie's Live "Orchestral" Setup





Drumset: Ludwig Super *Classic* (4-ply shells) in marine pearl finish

6x13 Power Piccolo wood snare

9x10 tom

9x8 tom 9 x 10 tom

5 x 14 wood snare

8 x 1 2 tom

14 x 14 floor tom

12x14 Vector marching snare

16 x 16 floor tom

J. 16x24 bass drum

Cymbals: Sabian

(except where indicated) 16" AA Chinese 12" HH Mini Chinese

16" Wuhan China

12" HH splash 14"HH Fusion hats 4. 5. 6. 7.

16" HH Sound Control crash

10" HH splash

20" HH ride (jazz-rock

prototype) 17"AAX Studio crash

16" HH Chinese on top of 18" AA Chinese (hi-hat mounted)

Pads, Electronics, And Percussion aa. Sabian Cymbal Disc

bb. Rhythm Tech Trigger Triangle Visu-Lite electronic cymbal

cc. dd. Jing cymbal

ee. ff.

cowbell Wuhan Wind gong

Ludwig concert bells

bell tree

ii. Rhythm Techwindchimes

(double row) sleigh bells

jj. kk. Anvil rack/case

II. E-Mu SP-1200 drum machine

mm. KAT midiKHTI pad interface

Sapphire Percussions electronic pads

Hardware: Ludwig, including a double pedal with felt beaters, hi-hat, and tom mounts; Gibraltar rack system

Heads: Cannon coated *Attack* (single ply) on snare, clear Attack (twin ply) on tops of toms with Attack (single ply) on bottoms, clear Attack (single ply) on bass

Sticks: Vic Firth 5A Shogun, Buddy Rich, and 5B hickory models, all with wood tips

Electronics (other than listed above): Fishman transducers, Emulator E-II, E-Mu Procussion Roland S-550 and Simmons SDS V

Microphones: Audio-Technica

That's what I always loved about watching Gene Krupa's drum solos—he was so entertaining. And why not?

"So I decided I wanted to make my solo visual," Charlie explains. "When the initial band was put together, it was three keyboard players with me on drums. Since there was nobody moving on the stage—no guitar players, no singers—I intentionally began to be a little bit more visual. For example, I would stand up and play the timpani parts on the electronic pads over my head. It kind of stuck. Of course, it would be much easier to put the pads down in a nice flat position, which is the way I would do it in the studio. When continued on page 85

Charlie's Listeners' Guide

Here are the albums Charlie Adams says best represent his drumming.

Artist

Album Title

Yanni

Chameleon Yanni Chameleon JohnTesh

Bradley Joseph

Live At The Acropolis (CD and video) Techno-Color Niki Nana

Hologram Sky A Thousand Summers Hear The Masses

And here are the albums Charlie says he listens to most for inspiration. Album Title

Artist Buddy Rich Tony Williams

Emerson, Lake & Palmer Deep Purple Mahavishnu Orchestra Led Zeppelin Cream

Yes

any Believe It Tarkus, Brain Salad Surgery Made In Japan, Machine Head Birds Of Fire 1, 11

Wheels Of Fire

Fragile, Close To The Edge

Drummer Buddy Rich Tony Williams Carl Palmer Ian Paice Billy Cobham John Bonham Ginger Baker Bill Bruford

Dealing With Yanni's Odd Meters

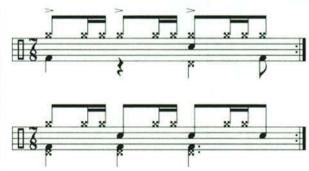


One of Yanni's "signature" time signatures is 7/8. "Our sevens," Adams explains, "are broken into two, two, and three (1-2-1-2-3), or just the opposite (1-2-3-1-2), as opposed to counting one-two-three-four-five-six-sev.' I never say the word 'seven'; if I do have to count to seven, I say 'sev' because I don't want it to be two syllables." The

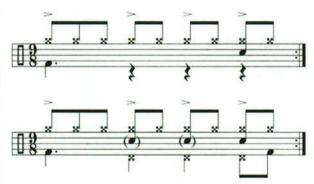
following examples are representative of the beats Charlie plays on Yanni compositions such as "Within Attraction" and "Keys To Imagination."



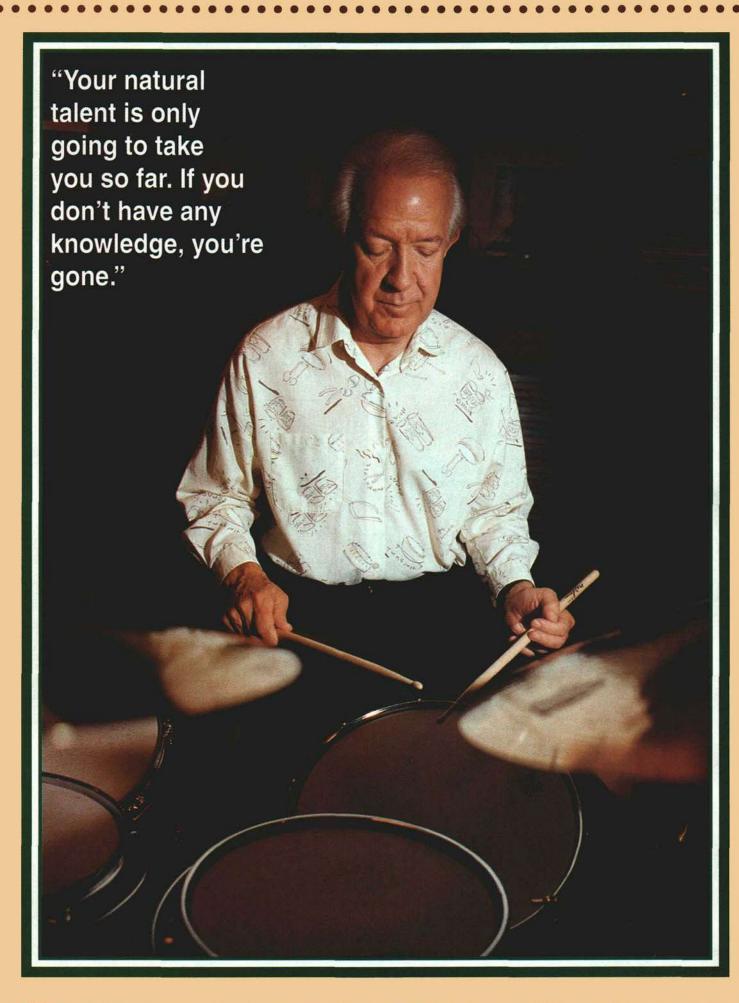
"Most of the Middle Eastern rhythms we play are sevens, but when I want to jazz up the 7/8, I'll use an 8th-note and two-16ths pattern. Kind of like 'one-ana-one-ana-one-anauh'," he enunciates slowly. "It's hard to explain. I used to count it. Now I just feel it."



"The 9/8s that we play," continues Adams, "which might normally be broken down into three, three, and three, we play three, two, two, and two. So we're playing 1-2-3-1-2-1-2-1-2. Usually all the 'Is' are slightly accented. It sounds almost 'dancey'." This pattern is based on the beat Charlie plays on the tune "Marching Season."



"To the Greek culture, 9/8 and 7/8 are dance rhythms," Charlie explains. "I've watched Greek women dance: They knowwhere all the accents are, as opposed to when I hear a Western jazz or rock band play a 7/8. They make you understand why it's called an odd time signature! But our audience doesn't even know a song is in 7/8. They don't think it's odd, because it flows,



JOE PORCARO

oe Porcaro can still recall the night before his first big L.A. session, laying in bed, staring at the ceiling the whole night through. It was a record date for Nancy Sinatra. Who knew what would be thrown at him the next morning? It was twenty-six years ago, but Porcaro still remembers the fears he had, such as whether he would be confronted with a tough mallet part. As it happened, he played orchestra bells, tambourine, and timps, and all went fine.

He shouldn't have been concerned. Porcaro had been preparing since he was six years old, accompanying his dad—a part-time snare

drummer in an Italian symphonic band in Connecticut—to gigs. In drum & bugle corps, Porcaro played the drum cadence in between the songs during the fiestas for

Covering It All

the Saints. At eight, he began to take reading lessons from the conductor of that band, and the clarinet player taught him about time signatures and note values. To pay for lessons, Porcaro shined shoes outside a pool room, zeroing in on the winners he knew would tip him well.

Porcaro also had a few lessons with a pit drummer from a local theater, and he participated in a Catholic Youth Organization band with his friend Emil Richards. But all of this was a prelude to the serious studying that followed when he came in contact with Al Lepak and Hartt College. While learning the nuts and bolts with Lepak, Porcaro and the instructor became very close, with Lepak even inviting Joe to attend rehearsals with him.

At seventeen Porcaro was asked to be the third percussionist with the Hartford Symphony. Interestingly enough, Joe, who still feels his mallet playing is inferior to his proficiency on other instruments, ended up taking over the mallet chair in the symphony when Emil Richards was drafted. (Joe then finally bought an old xylophone to woodshed!)

Jazz exploded in Porcaro's life around this time, and being just two hours from New York, the teenager traveled to Birdland to sit in the bleachers. It wasn't long before he was packing up quickly at the symphony rehearsals to make it to his gig as house drummer at the local jazz club. Between those two jobs and his weekend stint playing at a Greek restaurant, Joe was becoming an expert at odd meters.

By Robyn Flans

Photos By Michael Bloom

"Playing in the symphony orchestra and in chamber groups," Porcaro recalls, "we did pieces like Stravinsky's 'Les Noces' and 'L'Histoire du Soldat'—which are both in odd times. It's one of the best challenges for a percussionist. I also performed Bartok's 'Sonata For Two Pianos And Percussion', which also has a lot of odd-time playing. In the Hartford Symphony Orchestra, we did the 'Rite Of Spring' and I played the second timpani part. And at the Greek restaurant, where they had some great belly dancers, all their music was in seven, nine, eleven, or thirteen.

"If I was playing in nine and lost it, I would never hear the end of it from those girls," laughs Porcaro.

One summer, Emil Richards, who was doing well in the L.A. studio scene, returned to Connecticut on vacation. He planted the seed in Porcaro's mind. Joe visited Emil out in L.A. to see what doing sessions really consisted of, and by the end of the week, Joe told himself that, with the exception of mallets, he could handle the studios. So Porcaro went back to

Connecticut and spent a year working on mallets before packing up his wife and four kids—Jeff, Mike, Steve, and Joleen—and moving west.

It was the right decision. Through recommendation and ability, Porcaro's session work as drummer/percussionist began almost immediately, and it hasn't slowed much since. In fact, his career in music has been impressive: He has worked with nearly every important composer in Hollywood; he's written two drum books, *Joe Porcaro Drumset Method* and *Odd Times—A New Approach To Jazz, Latin And Rock;* he's co-director at the Percussion Institute of Technology in Hollywood; and he's currently involved in two businesses—drumsticks and instrument covers.

Still a first-call percussionist for film and TV, Porcaro knows that his experience and thirst for knowledge is responsible. He still finds time to play in jazz clubs once a month, and he is well-known as a man who loves to improve at his craft.



RF: Do you remember anything about doing your first TV session, *Daktari?*

JP: I was very impressed that Shelly Manne, a drummer I had admired all my life, was also the composer.

RF: Were you nervous?

JP: I was nervous as all hell. When studio players go to work, they're a bit on edge.

RF: Are you always a little on edge?

JP: Not always, although I think it's healthy to have that little edge. It keeps you sharp.

RF: What did you know about click tracks?

JP: I had never worked with a click track up until then.

RF: So you walked into the first big session of your life and were met with a click track?

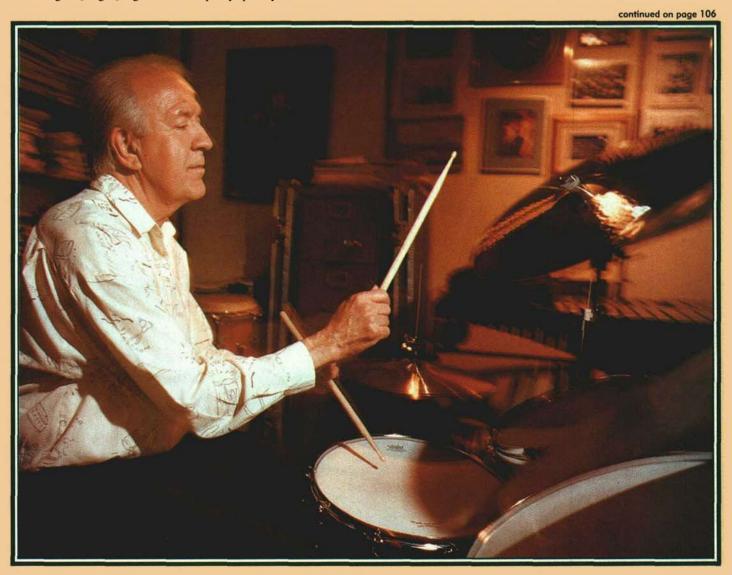
JP: Right. [laughs] I got used to it pretty quickly. I had dealt

'I remember one day Jeff was in the drum booth and I was playing congas on a session for a TV movie. He looked over at me and shook his head—in other words saying, 'Dad, this isn't for me.' He was very bored on those dates. After that he wouldn't take that kind of studio call. He only enjoyed record dates."

with metronomes before, but this was a little different because you're listening to a click and following a conductor. Of course, not everything was on click. A lot of studio work is done to timing, so the conductor has a big clock up there. There's a timing sheet showing how long a cue has to be, and the conductor knows how many beats per minute it should be. Shelly Manne had good time, and he worked very well with a timing clock.

There's a funny story about Shelly and how we became friends. I had been giving my son Jeff lessons every week when he was young, and before I knew it, he was showing *me* some hip stuff. I'll never forget one day I was doing a Mancini date at Universal. I was play-

ing percussion and Shelly was the drummer. I was writing something down when Shelly came over and said, "What are you doing?" I said, "I'm putting together some stuff with rudiments." And he said, "You don't need that shit. Who the hell



The Drummers Of London's Mest End Theaters

By Philip Hopkins

London's West End theater world is big business, a rare success story in the recession-racked '90s. In 1993, over eleven million people bought tickets to shows and plays at the major forty to fifty London theaters. Many of these shows employ musicians. The bottom line is that there are a lot of drummers and percussionists working day-in, day-out, year-in, year-out in West End

shows. And for every player who has a full-time job performing in a show or play, there are yet more musicians who make a full-time living from "depping" (as subbing is known in England) on any number of shows.

The growing success of West End musicians in the '80s and '90s was aided by the high-profile hit shows of composer Andrew Lloyd-Webber (including *Cats, Phantom Of The Opera*, and *Sunset Boulevard*) on both sides of the Atlantic, and dynamic new producers like



Cameron Mackintosh, who has many productions of his London shows playing in theaters worldwide. Combine their influence with the regular revival of classical musicals from the past, and the West End can safely say that "business has never been better."

This activity has coincided with a steady tailing-off of the bread-and-butter session work of the '70s and '80s, which means that playing in a show is no longer considered second-best to a career in the studios. Musicians who in the day-

time have been recording with artists such as Sting, Elton John, and George Michael or on TV and movie soundtracks can be found by night plying their trade in the orchestra pits of the West End. The standard of playing is thus exceptionally high across the board, as befits an area of the music business where salaries are good and the paycheck steady.

I discussed aspects of the business with the drummers and percussionists on three of London's most popular musicals: *Cats, Miss Saigon,* and *Sunset Boulevard.* These gentleman were equally modest about their achievements and appreciative of the abilities of their peers throughout the West End theater world. While talking to them I had to remind myself that, as any musical director will tell you, the drummer is the vital element in any show or musical. The drummers of the West End are key members of a vibrant industry.

Chris Baron, aged

thirty, has been playing drums and percussion in Miss Saigon at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, since the show opened in 1989. Before that, he played in Stephen Sondheim's Follies at the Shaftesbury theater, as well as several other shows. Chris is much in demand for orchestral, jazz, and studio work, being one of that rare breed of performers equally known for tuned percussion and drumset work.

PH: How did you get into show work?

CB: It was very much through college, actually. I went to the Guildhall School

of Music and Drama here in London. A lot of people I work with in shows were also at the Guildhall. Each year we did a musical, and musical directors from the West End would come in and conduct them. Martin Koch did onehe later did Miss Saigon and Follies-and that was my first contact with him.

PH: You were depping on *On* Your Toes when I first met

CB: That was my first West End gig. It was towards the end of my time at college, and I was depping for Julian Fairbank, who had been at the Guildhall before my time. So there

was a connecting link through the college, through mutual friends and experiences.

PH: Did your college experiences leave you well-prepared for the work you did in shows?

CB: Inevitably a lot of it was learning on the job. I learned the most from doing those first deps on On Your Toes, from Julian in fact. Julian had started depping on that show and then took over. He was very, very precise on learning the part.

PH: Was that on drumset?

CB: Yes. He learned the part a hundred percent before he went in to do it so that it was completely safe on his first night. And I did the same thing, trying to cover all the corners of nerves or anything going wrong.

PH: If you were a young person looking to find a good background to get into this kind of work, what skills do you think are most important in developing?

CB: The reading obviously is very important. And I think that's developed just by doing it. I used to do lots of rehearsal bands, big bands. You don't learn to read by being able to stop and go back over a few bars; you have to get into the habit of going right through a whole piece. Also, going to a music college is very good from the point of view of getting used to playing with conduc-



Chris Baron

tors. Conductors are all so different, it's so much a question of their temperament and getting used to the eye contact and communication rather than just the stick movement.

PH: Do you find that having a series of conductors in Miss Saigon over the years has caused the band to take a while to adjust to the different placement or interpretation of the beat?

CB: Conductors have very different styles. Some conductors from an orchestral background expect to hear the note well after the downbeat—others are much more precise and want you to play right on top of the beat. You have to get used to the individual.

PH: In Miss Saigon you combine drumset with classical snare drum and even some timpani. Do you think that a rock drummer could come in and do those things, or do you need an orchestral background?

CB: I think a rock drummer could come in and do it. I feel someone with orchestral experience would do it better, generally. There'd be exceptions on both sides.

PH: On a similar subject, I know you also play jazz and big band. Do you feel your time playing is affected by follow-

> ing the whims of a conductor?

CB: I think it is—badly! It's really important to keep things going outside the show. I've probably practiced a lot more over the last three or four years than I have at any other stage. I need to, just to keep my playing on a certain level-not necessarily to even improve. I practice working on my time with a metronome, because in the show you can become very much a creature of habit, and the time can flow and go

backwards and forwards. The conductor's the boss—in theory—so you have to go with all the ebbs and flows that may come from the singers on stage or conductors trying to be expressive, or just plain old bad habits. Things can creep in very easily.

PH: Do you find that doing other work corrects that and keeps your playing sharp?

CB: It keeps your mind healthy in the show. I find that if I do all the shows in a two-week period, by the end of the two weeks I'm probably not playing the show as well as if I'd missed a few shows.

PH: That's interesting, because there's a philosophy among some musical directors that musicians in shows shouldn't have time off, but should be on long contracts like the actors.

CB: I disagree with that because, if the musician is indisposed, particularly in

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Barry De Souza has

occupied the drum chair of Andrew Lloyd-Webber's show *Cats* at the New London Theatre for ten years. However, for Barry, playing for West End shows has been the second phase in a career that blossomed in the heady session scene of the '70s and early '80s. The list of names with whom Barry has recorded and toured resembles a Hall Of Fame of classic pop and rock artists. Barry played on Lou Reed's "Walk On The Wild Side," and on the soundtracks of Bond movies *The Spy Who Loved Me* and *Octopussy*. Other credits include Art

Garfunkel, Randy Crawford, Kate Bush, Billy Ocean, Rod Stewart, Rick Wakeman, Freddy Mercury, and Charles Aznavour, to name but a few. Barry has also played on many jingles and TV shows.

PH: How did you start in the music business?

BDS: I used to do pub gigs with Rick Wakeman, which was how I got into sessions. I was on his *Six Wives Of Henry VIII* album.

PH: So that led to other sessions?

BDS: Yes. He introduced me to a few fixers. The first big session I did was for David

Katz. I hadn't had much studio experience when I walked in there. There was a big string orchestra for Patti LaBelle. It was frightening! But it turned out okay.

PH: How old were you? **BDS:** Just over twenty.

PH: What got you going on drums as a youngster?

BDS: I didn't start until I was about thirteen. My father was a professional jazz piano player, so I started off on piano, violin, and trumpet. Then I did a couple of gigs with my dad when I was thirteen or fourteen.

PH: But all that piano study helped with the reading?

BDS: Yes, and I went to Max Abrahams for a couple of years. He used to be a big-time teacher. That was to sort out the reading on the drums.

PH: After the Rick Wakeman work, did more sessions come in?

BDS: Yes. It

became the eight o'clock jingle, followed by ten-to-ten sessions. It used to be like that seven days a week.

PH: When was that period?

BDS: About 1970 to the mid '80s. It started to slow down around 1984.

PH: What caused that?

BDS: People weren't spending much money. There was also the drum machines. Also, a lot of sessions used to involve replacing drum parts for bands that couldn't play. Most of the guys can

your

lifestyle from the hectic days to being based in one place?

BDS: It was hard at first. I used to love rushing round from studio to studio. But the work's not there anymore. I like to play, and at least with *Cats* it's not the same all the way through—there's different styles of music.

PH: Do you think that most of your contemporaries from the days when the ses-

sion work was really busy are now doing West End shows?

BDS: Some are. A lot have gone into the writing bit, so they can survive on royalties from that. There are a few people who would like to get into shows but can't at the moment.

PH: I remember being told that the musicians on Aspects Of Love at the Prince of Wales Theater were paid just over the studio session rate per show to stop them going off and doing a session.

BDS: But sometimes you just have to take a night off!

PH: What kind of music do you like to play to recharge your batteries?

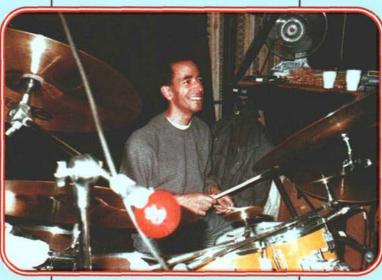
BDS: Jazz, funk. I like out-and-out jazz, and I'll often go to Ronnie Scott's [major London jazz club] after work.

PH: How did you get into Cats?

BDS: I knew the bass player, John Mole, from sessions. He used to be in Jon Hiseman's band. Graham Ward was doing *Cats* at the time. Graham wanted to do some other things, so I was offered it. I had to think twice about taking it on. I wasn't sure, but I could see the whole session thing was slowing down.

PH: *Cats* seems a nice show to play because the drummer can play a lot.

BDS: Yes. I like to change things around too, although there are certain places where you have to stick to the part, for the dancers. Other places you can play



Barry De Souza

play now!

PH: I'd like to compare your lifestyle then with now. Were the sessions like a Monday-to-Friday job?

BDS: No. It got so bad at one point that there was a whole section of us who used to tell people that if they wanted us to work Sundays we'd have to be paid double rate. You couldn't get any time off! It used to be really crazy.

PH: Where were most of the studios?

BDS: In town [London]. There was Pye, Decca, Morgan, Advison.

PH: Before you did *Cats*, you never did a West End show except for four weeks of *Masquerade*. Did people ever ask you to do shows?

BDS: No. It was a completely separate world.

PH: Now that you're committed to the show, how do you like the change in

Julian Fairbank is a fourteen-year veteran of the West End show world. His early experiences included On Your Toes and playing timpani in the Broadway version of The Pirates Of Penzance when it moved to London. Subsequently Julian performed in Les Miserables, La Cages Aux Folles at the London Palladium, Starlight Express in Japan, Miss Saigon, and his current show, Andrew Lloyd-Webber's latest hit, Sunset Boulevard, with Patti Lupone. Julian has done other shows and extra work with London's top orchestras and high-profile TV shows. I talked to him during the break between a matinee and evening performance of Sunset Boulevard, which is playing at the Adelphi theater.

PH: *Sunset Boulevard* is obviously big news in the West End. Did the rehearsal period seem any more involved than those of other shows you've done?

JF: Yes. There were new arrangements coming in every day, with the production team closely involved. Whereas when a show comes in from the States, it's all established—you play it and that's it. With this show we'd get new music coming in linking scenes, new versions of numbers—that sort of thing.

PH: Did you deal with Lloyd-Webber in person or with the arranger?

JF: Both. The arranger was around a lot, behind the conductor, and he would also come and chat to the players. Lloyd-Webber would say things via the production musical director.

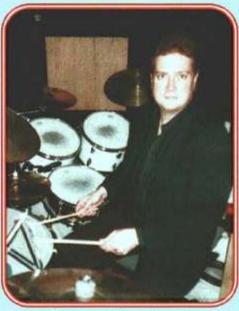
PH: In terms of your playing of the show, did you have to develop any new skills or slants to your playing? For example, with electronics?

JF: There wasn't so much of that in that we're using familiar instruments. But inevitably there was, like in any show, the question of working out the best setup for getting around the gear. Also, having played a lot of percussion recently, I'm enjoying playing drumset, too.

PH: Did the musicians in the show orchestra do the cast album?

JF: Yes, but they augmented the strings and for one or two numbers the winds. And we had an extra percussionist on one or two sessions. The album ended up being a real mix because it included some things that were recorded even before we were employed on the show. I would say that three quarters of it was recorded by the theater orchestra, augmented and otherwise.

PH: You have an excellent reputation as a timpanist. Why are you playing shows rather than orchestras? Is it choice, or do



Julian Fairbank

these things just happen?

JF: A bit of both, really. It's partly something that's just happened. I've always been involved with shows, since college days. So there's a background in playing shows there, knowing what they're about. I do enjoy the orchestral work that I do, but I find that I'm temperamentally better-suited to theater work. I like the fact that there's quite a big variety of instruments to play rather than sitting there in a chair with a triangle or whatever.

PH: What kind of personality is required to be called for, and to survive, a long-running show?

JF: You've got to be on a pretty even keel temperamentally, I feel, as inevitably on any show there are going to be ups and downs when you're working

closely with people. You need to keep a sense of humor and try to keep a fresh approach.

PH: If you had a student who wanted to play shows, what skills apart from reading would you recommend he or she acquire?

JF: I'd say that where a lot of people fall down, say if they're depping on a show, is in physically getting around the equipment. While it's not necessarily a musical skill, it's very important in a show to think about setups and to get used to playing an instrument some distance from a music stand.

PH: How did you come to do *Sunset Boulevard?*

JF: It was quite straightforward in that the contractor whom I have done other shows and bits of studio work for saw me as an obvious choice. I think he knew that I would appreciate a change (from *Miss Saigon*); also he picked up on the fact that people had said I could play drums and percussion, so he decided I'd be a good choice.

PH: How many contractors are there and how does the system work?

JF: I suppose there must be half a dozen at any one time booking most of the West End. There'll also be one show booked by someone who's apparently come from nowhere and you don't hear of again.

PH: So how does the system work?

JF: I think it works in all sorts of different ways. It's sometimes quite hard to pinpoint how you came to be doing something. My way into working in the West End essentially was depping for a friend who was doing a show about fourteen years ago. I was mentioned by the m.d. to the contractor. That particular contractor then booked me for a threemonth tour of a show, which he presumably saw as not too much of a big risk. That was the tour of My Fair Lady after it had closed in the West End, in 1981. Then slightly unusually with Pirates Of Penzance, my next show, the American arranger came over and interviewed people. And it proceeded from there. Once I started doing shows and was hopefully doing a reasonable job, things continued. The musical director of *Pirates Of* Penzance, Martin Koch, asked for me on

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SABIANHH

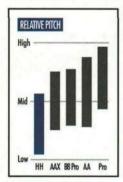
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Impact Laser Custom Drumkit

by Rick Van Horn

These high-tech fiberglass drums offer big sound and light weight...and that's just for starters!

Impact is not a big name in the drumset arena, although the company has actually offered drumkits for quite a while. But they are extremely well-known in the marching field. In fact, under their own and some private-label brands, they have sold literally tens of thousands of drums over the past twenty years. Their success has been based largely on the fact that their drums are made of fiberglass—allowing them to be extremely light, extremely powerful, and moderately priced. They are now making a concerted effort to bring the qualities that have made them a leader in marching drums to the drumset market.

Our test kit consisted of a 16x22 bass drum, 8x10 and 9x12

rack toms, 14x14 and 16x16 floor toms, and three 14" snare drums (4", 6", and 7" depths). Although the company offers both double-headed and single-headed (cutawaystyle) drums, with both solid and ported shells, our *Laser* series test drums were very traditional in nature: double-headed and solid-shelled. The one exception was the bass drum, which did feature Impact's "Sound Hole" in the side of the shell. (More about that later.) Three straight cymbal stands, one boom stand, a double tomtom stand, a snare stand, a hi-hat, and a bass drum pedal were included in the hardware package.

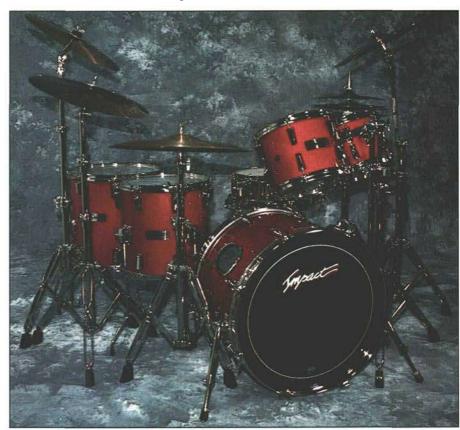
Construction

Impact's shells are hand-laid (rather than sprayed into a mold) using the highest-tech fiberglass fabric available and a very high proportion of fabric to resin. This is what allows the shells of the bass drums and toms to be extremely thin (just under 1/8") and light yet extremely strong and resilient. With over 10,000 marching drums in the field, Impact's president, Terry Thirion,

states that the company has never had a shell returned due to breakage. Impact guarantees their shells for five years.

Each shell is lined with a white, glossy *Mylar* sheet, which is actually bonded to the fiberglass and is an element of the molding process rather than a cosmetic afterthought. Small wrinkles can sometimes occur in this sheeting (there were a few on our test kit), but they are a result of the molding process and not a quality defect. They have no effect whatever on the sound or construction integrity of the drums.

The screws that hold lug casings and mounting brackets onto the shells are backed with small aluminum plates to add strength yet keep weight to a minimum. The finishes on the outside of the shells are traditional covering material, as opposed to a color impregnated into the fiberglass. Impact found that adding color to the fiberglass would require additional steps in the laying-up process, and would also add cost. It was more economical to use the same type of covering materials found on most covered drums. The wine red finish on our test kit was deep and attractive; other finishes available include white, black, gray, chrome, and red or blue prism.



A major feature of Impact drums is their light weight. Even with lugs, rims, heads, spurs, and mounting brackets attached, the drums are much lighter than wood models in the same sizes. The bass drum, for example, weighed only 21 1/2 pounds, making it very easy to handle. The light weight of the toms allows for the possibility of suspending larger-than-usual drum sizes on stands or racks without undue strain. The 14x14 tom, for example, weighed only 11 pounds (including three leg brackets), and could easily become a rack tom.

Impact designed their snare drums based on information they learned in the marching field. As a result, snare shells are double-thickness (a little under 1/4") for strength against high tension. (Even so, they are still considerably lighter than wood- or metal-shell drums in comparable sizes.) The drums have twelve tuning lugs, parallel snare mechanisms with snare-tension adjustments at both ends, and (somewhat sur-

prisingly) tension-adjustable internal mufflers. When I asked Terry Thirion about the mufflers, he said simply that "Fiberglass snares tend to have a lot of ring. The mufflers work well on our marching snares, so we brought them over to the kit drums. We know that they're not 'in vogue,' but we tend to break a lot of rules."

Sound

The way Impact drums are constructed contributes significantly to their sound—which is simply tremendous. It's basic physics: A thin body can resonate more than a thick one, and a dense material with a shiny surface reflects more sound than a soft material with a dull surface. As a result, Impact's thin fiberglass shells with their *Mylar* interiors produce a sound quite a bit bigger than their size would indicate. That sound projects well, and is very sensitive to modification by means of drumhead selection. For example, the toms all came fitted with Remo *Pinstripe* heads both top and bottom. This is a little unusual, since a *Pinstripe* is not a resonant head and isn't normally found on the bottoms of toms. But the natural brightness and resonance of the fiberglass shells is nicely balanced by the effect of the *Pinstripes* to create a full, warm, round, and powerful drum sound. If that's not your cup of tea, you might swap the heads (as I did) for coated Ambassadors on the tops and clear Ambassadors on the bottoms of the toms. They instantly became more cutting—barking out with a clean, sharp attack. The point is that the drums proved extremely versatile in terms of tonality, yet always retained the sheer bigness of their sound.

The bass drum was a joy to play—again owing largely to an element of its construction: the Sound Hole. This is an oval hole roughly 4" x 6" cut into the drumshell at approximately the two o'clock position (viewing the drum from behind). What this hole does is allow the drum to be "ported" without needing to have a



hole cut into its front head. You still have access to the inside of the drum for muffling and/or miking purposes, but you retain the advantages of a solid front head: more resonance, more tone, and more depth of pitch. Obviously if you want an even punchier, more directed sound, you can still put a hole in the head. But the Sound Hole gives you the best of both worlds, and contributes to a really massive bass drum sound. (By the way, although Impact highly recommends that all bass drums be fitted with Sound Holes, they are available without them.)

Fiberglass is a material that seems custom-tailored for snare drums. It offers resonance, reflectivity, accurate reproduction of frequencies bounced against it, and a total disregard for changes in climate. (That last feature means that you'll get the same sound indoors or outdoors, hot or cold, wet or dry.) So I was not surprised at the crispness, response, and projection of the Impact snare drums I played. But I was impressed. The 4" drum was a perfect mid-to-high-pitch instrument, with a tuning range that would allow it to go from an all-purpose drum to a piccolo-type special effect. The 6" model could be tuned high enough to also serve as an all-purpose drum, but easily slid down into a power rock or fatback range. And the 7" drum retained excellent snare response and crispness while producing a really beefy, throaty punch that could easily fill an arena. With their chrome covered finishes the drums looked sharp, and they'd easily blend into any drummer's setup. If you're only looking for a snare drum and not an entire kit, these drums should definitely be considered on their own merit.

Hardware

Impact makes no bones about the fact that the cymbal stands and boom, snare stand, tom-tom stand, hi-hat, and bass drum pedal that accompanied our test kit are generic Taiwanese products. As such, they are identical to hardware carrying a variety of other brand names. The stands all feature heavy-duty double-braced tripods, nylon bushings at the height adjustments, memory locks, and a quality of construction that makes them no better or worse than a lot of "budget" hardware on the market today. I found the equipment serviceable, if not state-of-the-art.

One aspect of the hardware with which I initially had some reservations was the double tom-tom stand and the brackets on the toms themselves. I was concerned that the somewhat diminutive brackets and the fairly small tom arms might not be strong enough to support the drums under heavy playing. But since the 10" and 12" toms only weigh 6 1/2 and 71/2 pounds respectively, the hardware had very little supporting to do. The stand and the brackets really only had to deal with the force of stick impact. This they were perfectly capable of doing—even under some pretty hard playing.

Impact provides stands and pedals primarily as a courtesy to drummers who like to buy their kits in a package; they don't consider themselves seriously in the hardware business. So I have no qualms in saying that if I were a consumer considering an Impact kit, I probably would look elsewhere for most of my hardware. This isn't entirely based on the quality of the equipment, but also on its size. One of the major advantages of Impact drums is their light weight, and I see no reason to offset that advantage by lugging around extra-heavy hardware (unless, of course, you mount very large, heavy cymbals and bash the dickens out of them). To be fair, Impact sent me their heavy-duty stuff because that's what

most drummers ask for. Terry Thirion informed me later that they do offer lighter-weight, single-braced versions as well. He also said that he is seriously considering upgrading the quality of all of the hardware to better correspond with that of the drums.

Conclusions

Impact's catalog stresses the company's ability—eagerness, actually—to work with drummers to create custom kits. They do offer five- and seven-piece "package" kits, mainly to give a prospective buyer a point of reference for pricing. But Terry Thirion likes nothing better than talking one-on-one with drummers regarding all aspects of their playing—from musical style to the type of vehicle the drums will be carried in. This is a significant advantage for the prospective buyer, who stands to really have a major role in the creation of his or her personal instrument.

The kit we reviewed (including the 6" snare) would carry a suggested list price of \$2,345—which puts it in the low mid-price range. Even given the limitations of the Impact hardware, that price would be a real steal, because the sound and construction quality of the drums are on a par with much higher-priced brands. And if you chose to use other hardware that brought the price up a bit, you'd still be getting a terrific deal on a kit with dozens of outstanding qualities. If your local drumshop has no information on Impact drums, contact the company at 333 Plumer St., Wausau, WI 54401, tel: (715) 842-1651, fax: (715) 845-1605.

Zildjian Z Custom Cymbals

by Rick Van Horn

When a thin cymbal isn't enough, but a thick cymbal is too much...

When Zildjian saw a need for cymbals that fell between their A and K lines, they came up with their A Custom series—and that series was a success. So it seems only logical that they would eventually apply what they learned to the "space" between their A and Z series. Here's the concept: Medium-weight cymbals with standard machine hammering and lathing sound beautiful, but sometimes can't provide the volume or stand up to the abuse necessary for today's

high-powered amplified music. Heavy, unlathed cymbals handle the abuse and provide the cut, but they can sound somewhat "plate-y"—sacrificing some of the shimmering sound of their lighter, lathed cousins. Zildjian has created their Z *Custom* series for drummers who want to have the best of both worlds.



Essentially, these cymbals are models from Zildjian's heavy, unlathed Z series that receive special lathing and hammering according to the company's new computercontrolled Custom manufacturing process. The result is a line of cymbals that is still heavy enough to take what almost any rock drummer can dish out, and still provide a sound that's recognizably that of a cymbal rather than a fire alarm. What's more, a couple of these models offer characteristics that might appeal to drummers who *don't* play at arena-level volumes. So let's take a look.

Ride Cymbals

There are two Z Custom rides: a 20" and a 22". Both are termed by Zildjian as "medium-weight" cymbals, and both feature large bells. These rides were designed to provide "clean, clear stick sound" with characteristics between an A Zildjian Rock Ride and a Z Series Light Power Ride. They are also said to produce "good overtones." That last quality can be a double-edged sword in a ride cymbal; "good overtones" can also be interpreted as "buildup" or even "gong-iness." What I discovered in our two test cymbals was that the 20" did, indeed, provide a clean, clear stick sound, without a lot of build-up. It was a cutting ride sound, with a moderate amount of sibilant "shimmer" but otherwise a fairly dry attack. The higher-pitched 22" model, on the other hand, produced a fairly pronounced build-up along with the stick attack to the point of what some drummers call a "roar." This can be good or bad, depending on what you want from a ride cymbal. But it certainly was not a dry, precise sound.

The bells of both cymbals produced very loud, piercing tones. They would easily serve to cut through the sound of amplified guitars. Additionally, the bells are quite large—offering easy targets for drummers who like to play "from the shoulder." The 20" ride is priced at \$280; the 22" model goes for \$335.

Crash Cymbals

Z Custom crashes come in four sizes (16", 17", 18", and 19") and in two weight categories: Medium and Rock (medium-heavy). They also provide the best illustration of the compromise between A and Z Series cymbals. They are loud, explosive, and cutting like Z Series cymbals, but they all have a shimmer and sparkle much more reminiscent of the A line.

Because these cymbals are directed toward heavy players, I made a point to test them with fairly heavy sticks: 2Bs, to be exact. And when I soundly walloped the crashes, they really did *explode* with powerful, cutting sound. The sustain of that sound was dictated—as might be expected—primarily by the size of the cymbal. The 16" cymbals were fairly quick; the 19" cymbals rang for days.

I wasn't fond of either 16" cymbal; they both seemed too thick and heavy in relation to their small diameter. A thick crash cymbal seems to need a greater diameter in order to really open up. The 16" Z *Customs* certainly did explode when hit, and they were loud—but they didn't seem to fully *develop* before they were gone. Of course, this is another of those characteristics that could be perceived as an asset by some drummers, depending on their tastes and needs.

My favorite crashes in both weight categories were the 17" and 18" models. They all responded well with full voices and powerful sustain. Surprisingly, I found that the 18" Medium could be used quite nicely as a "big-finish crash" in a lower-volume situa-

tion, played with a 5A stick. It didn't *have* to be walloped in order for it to sound full; it spoke out quite readily at a medium impact.

Owing to their sheer mass, the 19" cymbals took a good deal of effort to set in motion (more so with the *Rock* model than with the Medium)—but once they *were* set in motion, look out! These babies produced the best qualities of both a crash cymbal and a gong. No subtleties here; we're talking BIG cymbal sound.

Prices for the Z *Custom* crashes in either weight range are as follows: 16" - \$205; 17" - \$224; 18" - \$243; and 19" - \$262.

Hi-Hats

Z Custom hi-hats come in one weight range—medium-heavy—and two sizes: 13" and 14". Both sizes produced a loud and solid "chick" sound when closed with the foot. Both also produced an excellent, loud, "roaring wash" of sound when played half-open (a la hard rock). The closed sound was a bit "chunky"—a result of the cymbal weight—but quite clearly defined. Forget about open-and-closed swing patterns; these hi-hats don't have the finesse. But the 13" gave surprising quickness on funky patterns—reminiscent of Zildjian's 13" K/Z combo hi-hats, but with more attack. The price for 13" Z Custom hi-hats is \$306 per pair or \$153 singly; 14" models go for \$342 per pair or \$171 singly.

China Boys

What we have with the Z Custom China Boys is a compromise between sound and function. To get the authentic trashiness of a China cymbal, that cymbal needs to be quite thin. But an authentic, thin China cymbal wouldn't last three beats at the impact level the Z Custom series is designed to withstand. So the Z Custom China Boys offer a good, China-like character—providing vivid contrast to the sounds of the regular cymbals. Of the two available sizes, the 18" is most likely to serve in the traditional China-cymbal capacity. It's just thin and small enough to be explosive and fast in response. The 20", on the other hand, requires some serious attention in order to produce any sort of legitimate crash response.

The 20" cymbal did, however, offer an interesting alternative potential. Owing to its size and thickness, it worked extremely well as a trashy, jazzy ride cymbal! It put me in mind of the old Swish Knocker referred to by drummers of the '50s. And for fusion drummers who sometimes attack their Chinas on ride patterns, this cymbal would offer a bit more in the way of controlled stick definition while still retaining that unique "China" quality. The 20" Z Custom China Boy lists for \$325; its 18" sibling is priced at \$290.

Conclusions

It remains to be seen whether Zildjian's Z *Custom* line will be as successful as their A *Custom* series. But their intent has clearly been met. The cymbals are, indeed, much more powerful than A Zildjian models, and much more musical than Z Series cymbals. If that combination appeals to you, check 'em out.

Pro-Mark Self-Adjusting Beater

by Rick Van Horn

This is a nifty accessory item that puts a new twist on a familiar design, and as a result offers a genuine improvement. The name pretty much says it all: The *Self Adjusting Beater (S.A.B.)* adjusts its angle of attack automatically every time you strike the bass drum. That, in turn, allows it to hit the drumhead with its entire striking surface on every beat, thus maximizing impact power and getting the greatest possible amount of sound out of the drum.

The beater itself is a hard plastic cube with rounded corners—designed to look like one of an oversized pair of dice. As compared to most beaters, the head is fairly small—about 1 1/4 "

square on each face of the cube. But the density of the plastic material gives it substantial weight and a good, solid feel. The weight was, in fact, a bit greater than that of the standard-sized beater I'm used to playing. But it was a simple matter to lower the *S.A.B.* in my pedal to get the balance I was used to.

The beater head is fitted on two intersecting axles, which allows

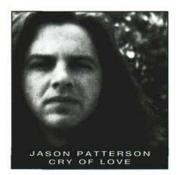


it to rotate both horizontally and vertically. (It doesn't rotate freely; there is resistance built in.) This capability is what allows the beater to adjust itself in such a way that the full face always strikes the drumhead—no matter how high the beater is in your pedal, or how far away the pedal yoke is from the drumhead. You don't have to do anything other than install the beater and step on your pedal.

In terms of sound, the hard plastic face of the beater produces a sharp, punchy bass drum attack. If that's not your preference, Pro-Mark has already begun to produce an upgraded model with a thin elastic pad attached to the opposite side of the beater. This pad creates a softer—but still powerful—attack. I've used a variety of hard, dense beaters over the years, and I'm partial to

them. I found the *S.A.B.* a worthy addition to my collection, and I'd recommend it to any drummers seeking power and/or variety in their bass drum sounds. The original, all-plastic *SelfAdjusting Beater* currently in stores carries a suggested retail price of \$21; the newer version with the soft pad should be shipping by the time you read this, and will be priced at \$24.95.

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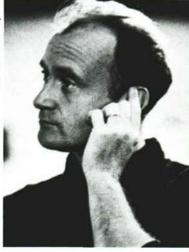
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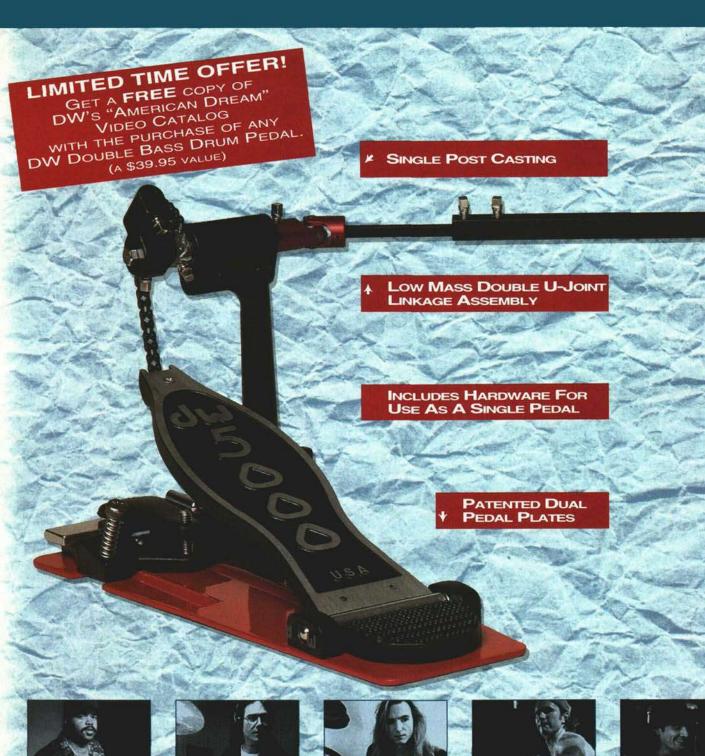


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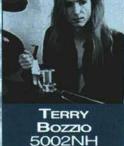


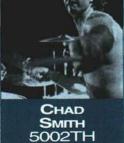
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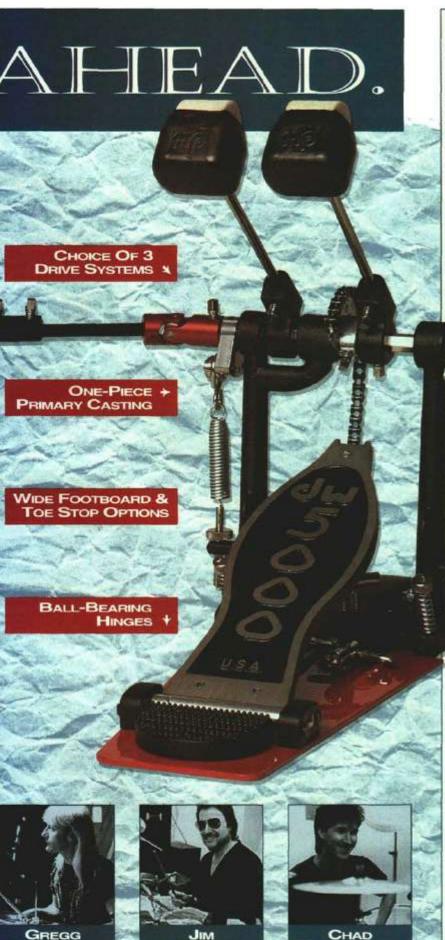
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Mackie CR-1604 Mixer

by Mark Parsons

Whether your drum sounds are acoustic, electronic, or both, here's a compact way to mix, control, and send them on their way.

A number of today's jobbing drummers are miking their drums, while others have gone the electronic route. A third contingent uses a hybrid of both methods (either adding pads to their kit or triggering from their acoustic drums). Regardless of the exact nature of their setup, all of these drummers need some sort of

mixing device to handle the signal-routing chores—as well as monitoring, level-balancing, equalization, effects send/return, headphone amplification, and all the other tasks involved in presenting your sound to your audience in as professional a manner as possible. That's a pretty tall order. Is the Mackie *1604* up to the task? We'll see.

Features

As the name implies, the 1604 is a sixteen-channel mixer. Six of the input channels have balanced XLR and 1/4" jacks capable of accepting pro-quality low-impedance mic's. Additionally, 48-volt phantom power is made available to these inputs, allowing the use of condenser microphones, which are superior at picking up cymbals. The other ten inputs utilize standard unbalanced1/4" jacks for signals from high-impedance mic's, drum modules, keyboards, guitar processors, tape decks, etc.

Except for the two styles of jacks, all the input modules on the 1604 are identical. Taking a tour of a typical input module starting at the top, we have four Aux Send knobs, which control seven Aux Sends. (Please stand by; it all makes sense and it's actually quite clever.) Auxiliary Sends are used to send a signal somewhere in addition to the main output (such as to a reverb), and the 1604's inputs each have four, which should be plenty for almost any drum processing you'd ever need. However, Aux 3 and 4 can be routed to two extra Aux Sends (5 and 6), while Aux I can optionally be sent to a dedicated monitor output. This means you can set up your own independent monitor mix and still have tons



of processing flexibility. Nice.

Next comes the EQ section, with separate controls for high, midrange, and low frequencies—giving you more control over your sound than a typical hi/lo EQ. After the left/right Pan knob is a Solo button, which solos the signal and sends it to a headphone jack. This useful feature allows you to privately preview an effect before committing it to the house P.A., or to fine-tune your mix between sets without disturbing the audience. Below this is a Mute button, which also sends the signal to alternate busses 3 and 4 (allowing you to set up a drum submix if you're using the board for more than just drums). At the bottom of the module is the channel fader.

The Master section features four pairs of stereo Aux Returns for returning signals from reverbs, tape players, etc., as well as the master faders and a Main Output Mute, which lets you kill the output from the board between sets without changing any of your settings.

Ergonomics

When you're working with equipment in a performance environment, the size and ease of use of your gear are often as important as the sound. The rack-mountable *1604* is compact (19" x 16" x 4") for the number of inputs it contains. This makes the front panel more crowded than the average P.A. board, but not unusably so. All the controls are logically laid out, making it easy to use right out of the box.

One minor complaint I have with the shallow depress-to-

engage buttons (which control the Solo, Mute, and Aux 5/6 functions) is that it's hard to tell if they're engaged or not. A bright blinking light lets you know if a channel is soloed, but you're on your own for the other functions. In one instance it took me a while to figure out that the reason I wasn't getting any snare was simply that the Mute button was depressed. How about an orange band around the bottom of the button or (more costly) an LED incorporated into the switch? (Or simply a deeper switch?)

Also (and I realize I'm getting picky here) the lettering on the front panel is small and very light gray on a dark gray background. I'd find it easier to read in less-than-perfect lighting if it were a bit bolder and *white* on *black*. That said, neither of my gripes really takes away from the functionality of the *1604*, especially since the layout's so simple you could almost run it in the dark once you familiarized yourself with it.

The input pod on the 1604 can be mounted in three different ways, depending on your needs. As the 1604 is sold, the inputs are on the "top" of the mixer (assuming vertical mounting in a rack). However, it's a simple operation to re-mount the pod so that all your cords come in from the back—thus saving rack space if you don't plan on re-patching cords often. A third configuration requires the use of the *Roto Pod*, an inexpensive bracket allowing you to place the inputs on the front, putting the jacks on the same plane as the controls for easy, table-top access (though the stock setup—jacks on top—is fine for table-top use as is).

Two other user-friendly items are the inclusion of a 12-volt lamp socket on the front panel and the fact that almost all of the controls on the *1604* have center detents indicating normal operating positioning (such as center pan, flat EQ, or unity gain). These features combine to make life a little easier for the drummer trying to set levels quickly on a darkened stage.

Documentation

Another factor affecting how easy any equipment is to use is the quality of the instructions, and here Mackie has done an absolutely first-class job. The well-illustrated manual covers each feature in detail, showing not only *what* each control does but also *how* to use it for best effect. Also included are "closer look" sections, where important subjects are gone into in depth. For



example, the manual details (with very clear drawings and text) two different ways to set up a separate drum submix. Along with the manual, Mackie also includes a twelve-page applications guide showing you how to patch the mixer into your system for just about any situation you could imagine.

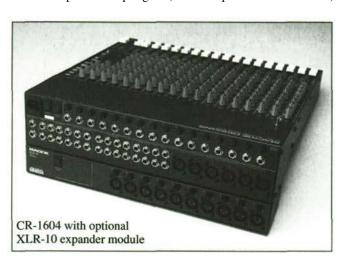
Applications

The word that best describes the *1604* is "flexible." For the primarily acoustic drummer (and I place myself in that category), the half-dozen XLR mic' inputs should be adequate for most miking situations. (For larger kits Mackie offers the *XLR-10* expander module, which contains an additional ten XLR/phantom-powered mic' inputs.) For electronic drummers, the sixteen line-level inputs will cover even the most elaborate setups, and the available headroom is more than enough for any signal you'd care to run.

It was an easy matter to get a good drum sound out of the *1604* in short order. The chosen low and high EQ points (80Hz and 12kHz) are indeed (as Mackie claims) more musical-sounding than the usual 100Hz and 10kHz positions found on mixers of this type, and the midrange control was useful in pulling some of the "boxy" tone out of the toms.

The mixer was very quiet (low self-noise) and the headphone function enabled me to get the mix very close to optimum before routing the signal to the speakers. As indicated in the manual, the headphone amp output is clean (it can even be used as an additional main output if necessary) and *very* hot. The benefit to drummers of the beefy headphone system is twofold: First, you can get the signal hot enough without distortion to accurately monitor and mix your drums as you're playing them (assuming phones with adequate isolation; open-air phones won't cut it). Second, if need be you can monitor external signals (click tracks, electronic percussion, or even your entire band) during performances. The headphone output will even drive multiple phones if the need arises.

The extensive headroom of the 1604 was very evident during use. I had to push the input gain (both trim pot and channel fader)



way beyond normal settings on a closely miked snare—a "worst case" scenario if ever there was one—just to get the input clip light to come on. This is definitely a drummer-friendly mixer in terms of dynamic range...and size, too. I opted for high-tech mounting of the 1604:1 plopped it on my trap case parked next to my floor tom, which put everything within easy reach. I had to be a little careful when adjusting the small knobs due to their proximity to each other, but overall I felt the compact size to be a real benefit.

Two other recent experiences I've had with 1604s will serve to further illustrate their flexibility in performance situations. (In both of these instances the mixers were fitted with XLR-10 modules, which worked as advertised—perfectly.) At an outdoor benefit I played recently with a pickup group, a 1604 was provided for our use. Mixing from the stage, I got my drum sound in the ballpark. Then I went out front to fine-tune it while the bass player hit each drum. In no time the 1604 was putting out a very satisfactory drum sound. The drums were submixed so they could be brought up or down as a unit, and (after deciding that I needed a different mix in my monitors than everyone else) we used the 1604's comprehensive Aux system to create a separate send for the drum monitors. I was a happy drummer that day!

A few months ago I ran sound for a group using a rented system featuring (you guessed it) a 1604. With seven drum mic's,

four vocal mic's, and a couple of guitar signals (along with main and monitor sends), that little board was full to the brim—and we had to start with virtually no sound check. Thanks in large part to the mixer's practical layout and sonic integrity, by the end of the first song we had a cohesive and professional-sounding mix. And as a testament to the 1604's reliability, that particular mixer had been subject to heavy rental use for a year or two—yet everything functioned without a hitch.

Conclusion

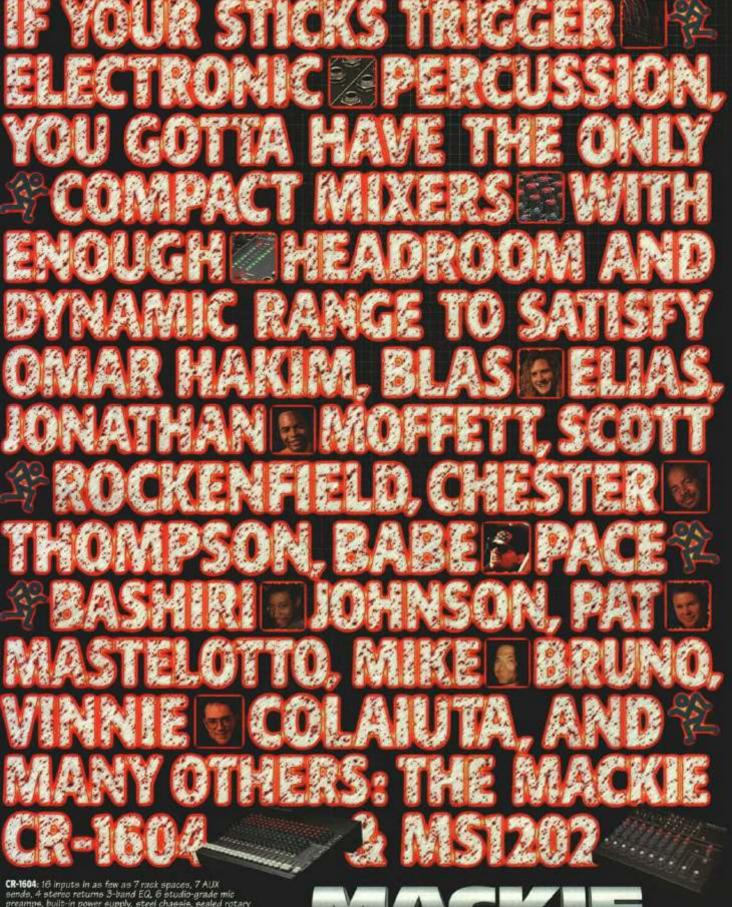
I think Mackie is definitely onto something by touting what was originally a recording/post-production product as a mixer for today's drummer. Minor complaints about the switches and small knobs aside, I found the *1604* to be a surprisingly professional product with enough flexibility to handle just about any task a drummer might ask of it. The *1604* retails for \$1,099, with the *XLR-10* expander module going for \$199. The *Roto Pod* bracket costs \$25. For more information, contact: Mackie Designs, Inc., 20205 144th Avenue, NE, Woodinville, WA 98072, (800) 258-6883.



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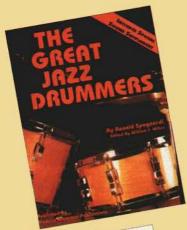
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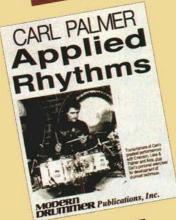
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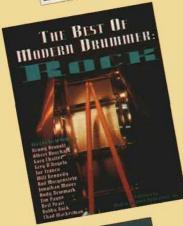
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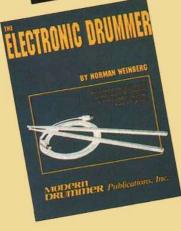
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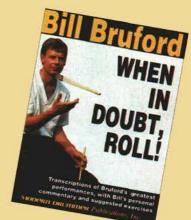
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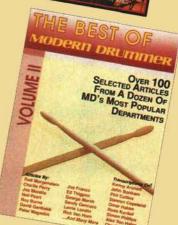
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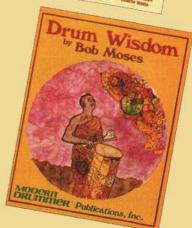
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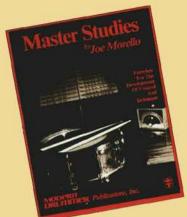


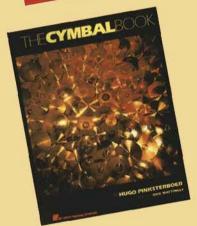






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MOD 11

JC's Custom Drums





JC's Custom Drums offers snare drums and drumkits customcrafted by Joe Chila in American hard rock maple. Six-ply toms and 10-ply bass drums and snare drums are standard; solidshell snare drums and other drums

featuring a variety of ply configurations are also available at the customer's discretion.

All sets are timbre-matched and available with catalyzed urethane finishes in "almost any color imaginable." Heavy-duty steel rims and PureCussion RIMS mounts are standard and included in the purchase price; die-cast rims are available at extra cost. All drums are signed and dated.

JC's also offers a custom rack—designed for the gigging drummer—capable of mounting several drums and/or cymbals on the bass drum, thus eliminating floor stands.

Snare drum prices range from a 3x13 at \$500 to an 8x14 at \$645; toms range from an 8x8 at \$350 to a 16x18 at \$510; bass drums range from a 16x20 at \$545 to a 16x26 at \$775. Custom edge cutting, re-covering, or painting of existing drums is also available. For more information, contact the company at 1669 E. Auburn Road, Rochester Hills, MI 48307, tel: (810) 852-3660, fax:(810)852-3723.

K&K Pickup Systems Relocates

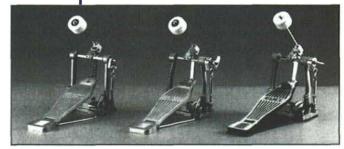
K&K Pickup Systems, makers of a variety of pickups and microphones for use on drums and percussion, have announced a new address for their U.S. distributor. It is: K&K Pickup Systems, c/o Mark Wallner, 150 Delta St., San Francisco, CA 94134, tel: (415) 467-8412, fax: (415) 468-2268.

Music Directory Canada

Norris-Whitney Communications, Inc. has released the sixth edition of Music Directory Canada. First published in 1983, the Directory boasts more than 6,000 listings in sixty different categories—everything from booking agents to record companies to music education—the definitive "who's who" in the rapidly expanding Canadian music industry. Music Directory Canada sells for \$29.95 (Canadian) plus \$4.00 shipping and handling. It can be purchased directly through Norris-Whitney Communications, Inc., 23 Hannover Dr. #7, St. Catharines,

Communications, Inc., 23 Hannover Dr. #7, St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada L2W 1A3. Customers can call toll-free from the U.S. or Canada at (800) 265-8481. From overseas, call (your country's Canadian access code) + 1-905-641-3471, or fax (your country's Canadian access code) + 1-905-641-1648.

New Mapex Foot Pedals



Left to right: Mapex P300M, P500S, and P700 pedals

Mapex Percussion recently redesigned their bass drum pedals for drumsets in the *Mars, Mars Pro, Saturn*, and *Orion* series. The new pedals are said to offer "quick response, outstanding durability, and an updated look."

A new cam design provides less friction and resistance between the spring assembly and the cam roller. The cam has an easy-turn die-cast thumb wing nut for quick and easy adjustments. The spring assembly screws and locks into the pedal frame with a locking hex washer and nut.

Also new to *P800*, *P790*, *P700*, and *P500S* pedals is the switch from chain drive to shaft drive. The new drive is a straight metal bar that connects from the bottom of the rocker assembly to the bottom of the footplate using precision machined screws. The shaft drive is said to have "a more natural feel and motion" than chain drive, along with "greater strength and durability."

The final enhancement to Mapex bass drum pedals (and also hihats) is the introduction of smoother, more streamlined footboards with a lighter, more contemporary look. For prices and other information write to Mapex, c/o Gibson USA, 1818 Elm Hill Pike, Nashville, TN 37210.

Flats Drumsticks



A new drumstick company called Echo is offering a unique design in sticks. Called *Flats*, the maple sticks feature a flat, 3/8"-thick shaft with a tapered shape that ends in a traditional nylon tip. The shape of the stick is said to "fit more comfortably in the hand and allow one to play with ease." The sticks are designed to be balanced with more weight in the rear, thus reducing fatigue and improving response. Different tones are said to be achievable by changing the way the sticks are held. The sticks are available both finished and unfinished. Echo, HC01 Box 230-2, Greeley, PA 18425, (717) 226-6221.

Trigger Perfect 210AP Modular Drum Trigger



Trigger Perfect's latest modular drum trigger is the 210AP. The trigger incorporates a number of improvements over earlier designs while still retaining Trigger Perfect's Modular design of user-replaceable parts. Advantages of the new trigger include an area that touches the head measuring only 1/16" x 3/8"—said to be twenty-five times smaller than other triggers. The chassis has also been re-designed to work with drums using PureCussion RIMS mounts, and tension rods are now used for all adjustments. The 210AP is designed to work directly with the inputs of all popular drum controllers, including the drumKAT, Roland TD-7, and Alesis D-4. Suggested list price is \$74.95. Trigger Perfect, 9454 SW Ochoco Dr., Tualatin, OR 97062-9560, tel: (800) 487-9997, fax: (800) 487-9997.

ADM Drums Employ Sleishmann Mounting System

ADM Drums of Australia have announced that their full range of block-shell snares, toms, and bass drums now come complete with the Sleishmann mounting system. This system eliminates any contact between the drumshell and hardware—only the heads touch the shell—creating what the company terms "unmatched resonance." The company's drums are made from such unique Australian hardwoods as jarrah and sheoak. Their new address is ADM Custom Drums Australia Pty/Ltd., 1st Floor, 47-49 Stirling Hwy., Nedlands 6009, Western Australia or P.O. Box 584, Wembley 6014, Western Australia, tel: 61-9-386-2001, fax: 61-9-386-2108.

New Ludwig Rocker Outfit



Ludwig has introduced an upgraded *Rocker* drum outfit targeted at entry-level markets. The new outfit (model *LR-1425-RC*) is a five-piece kit manufactured with nine-ply cross-grain shells, including a maple inner ply. The kit includes a 16x22 bass drum, a 16x16 floor tom, 10x12 and 11x13 power rack toms, and a 61/2 x 14 metal snare. Ludwig *Classic 700* double-braced hardware (snare stand, cymbal stand, hi-hat stand, and bass drum pedal) is part of the package. Additional rack toms, floor toms, and hardware are available for expansion.

The *Rocker* series features newly designed low-mass tube lugs for minimal shell contact and a "fresh dimension in design." (The chrome metal snare features Ludwig's *Classic* lug.) A new drum badge with the *Rocker* logo is on each drum, and the bass drum spurs have been redesigned for durability and easy function. The metal bass drum hoops are black coated and use the Ludwig *Classic* T-handles. Toms come fitted with clear drumheads; the bass drum front head is black with a port hole. The series is available in black, blue, red, and white covered finishes, and carries a suggested retail price of \$1,150. **Ludwig Industries, P.O. Box 310, Elkhart, IN 46515.**

Danmar Beaters On Axis Pedals



Engineered Percussion has now included Danmar bass drum beaters with their Axis pedals and has added other Danmar accessories to their line. According to Engineered Percussion's Darrel Johnston, "The addition of the Danmar line of beaters and accessories to our Axis pedals line creates some exciting possibilities for players. We are confident that the superb quality of Danmar products will satisfy our most stringent requirements." Axis single pedals retail for \$245; double pedals are

priced at \$565. For more information contact **Danmar**, 7618 Woodman Ave., #11, Van Nuys, CA 91402, (800) 346-6874 or Engineered Percussion, 24416 S. Main St., #310, Carson, CA 90745, (310) 549-1171.

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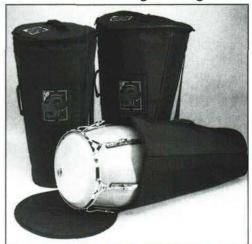
Evans 190 Collar On Snare And Tom Heads



Evans Drumheads has made their new 190 drumhead collar standard on all 6"-16" snare and tom-tom heads. The innovative design slightly moves the position of the drumhead's collar outward in relation to the drumshell, providing a more pre-

cise, unimpeded point of contact between the head and the bearing edge. According to Evans, this allows "fuller drumhead vibration and a fuller drum sound." Additionally, due to the unique curvature of the 190's re-designed collar area, lower tunings are said to be enhanced—especially in small (6", 8", 10") and large (14", 15", 16") drums, which effectively expands the drumset's available tonal range. The computer-aided design and formation of the 190 collar is said to yield "an unparalleled consistency that translates to easier and more confident use of all Evans heads." The new collar has been incorporated into Evans' entire range of *Genera, Uno 58, Rock, ST, Hydraulic,* and *Resonant* series drumheads. Evans Products, Inc., P.O. Box 58, Dodge City, KS 67801, tel: (316) 225-1308, fax: (316) 227-2314.

Marathon Conga Bags



Marathon conga bags are designed for a long life and produced for a professional's requirements. They are heavily padded yet extremely lightweight, and will fit any conga from 10" to 13" in head diameter. A double-bag set is also available.

For further information contact Roland Meinl Musikinstrumente, Postfach 1549,91405 Neustadt a.d. Aisch, Germany.



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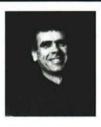
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Our drummers and percussionists know a good thing when they hear it. Gifted musicians can play anything they want to because of who they are. The featured artists chose Paiste cymbals because they sound best to them. That's why you should also consider Paiste cymbals. But wait, you might say, top artists all over the world have good sounding cymbals regardless of which brand they play - so what? Well, try and duplicate a set from a famous drummer playing another brand.

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The Nigerian Dance Groove: Part 1



by David Garibaldi



Last year in San Francisco I had the pleasure of seeing the Nigerian Dance Company perform. The "band" was all drums, and many of the pieces they played were in 6/8. One of the bandmembers played a hollow piece of wood with two sticks, and for the majority of the performance he played a very unusual pattern that he would "ride" on and then improvise. The improvising was all based on the basic groove he was playing. This series of exercises is based on that stick pattern. As you will see, this pattern can be adapted to the drumset very easily.

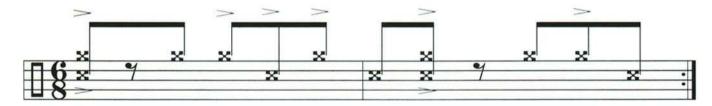
Here is the basic pattern, which was played on one surface with two sticks. The right-hand is written on top, the left hand on the bottom.



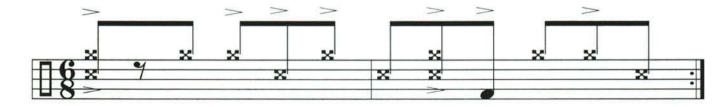
Try counting the 6/8 in "2," as if you were in 2/4 and playing 8th-note triplets.



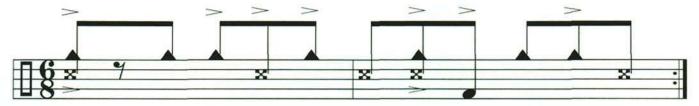
Now play the right-hand part on the hi-hat and the left-hand part as a sidestick across the snare drum.



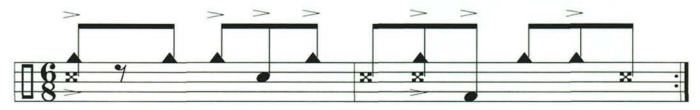
Add a bass drum on the "a" of beat 1 in measure two.



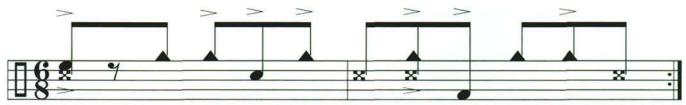
Substitute the right hand on the cowbell for the right hand on hi-hat, and the left hand on hi-hat for the left hand on sidestick.



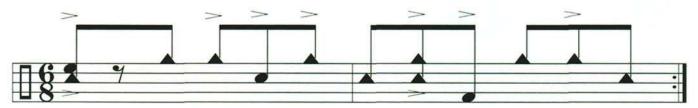
Now substitute the left-hand snare drum for left-hand hi-hat on the "&" of beat 2, measure one.



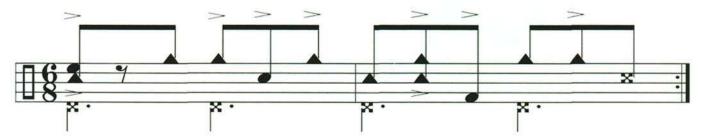
Substitute the right-hand tom for right-hand cowbell on beat 1, measure one.



Substitute small cowbell for all left-hand hi-hat notes.



Now add your left foot on the hi-hat, playing dotted quarter notes. This provides a note on each downbeat, which helps with "locking in" the other parts.

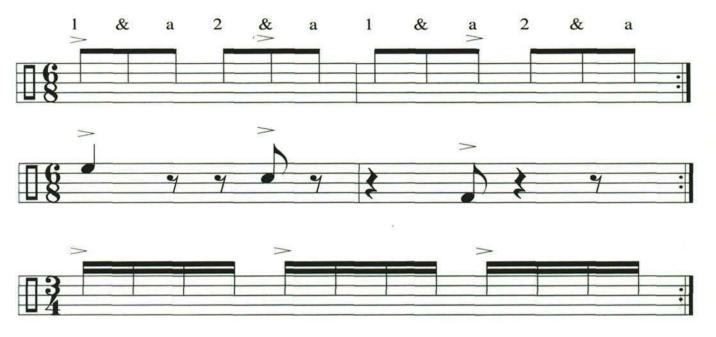


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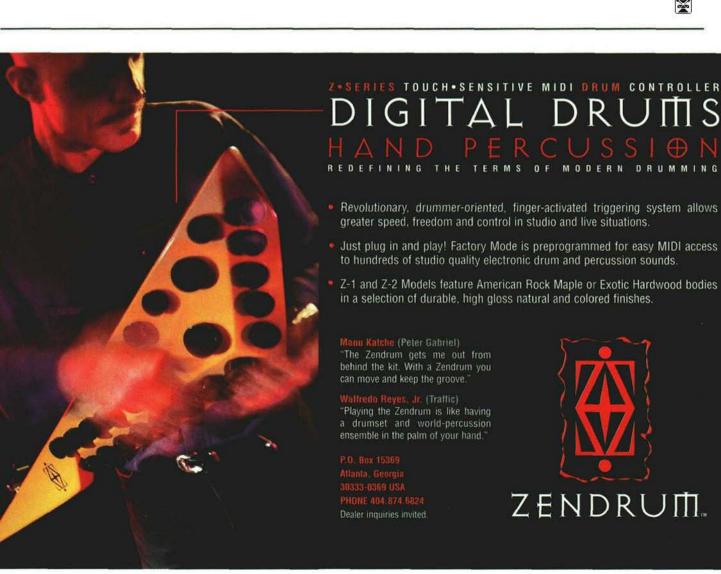


Notice the tom, snare, and bass drum parts: Listen to these voices as you're playing this groove—you'll hear a half-note triplet. This implies a 3/4 feel within the 6/8.



There's much more that can be done with this, and we'll cover some of those things next time. Enjoy!





READERS' PLATFORM

continued from page 6

azine devoted to religion, morality, or sociology. We are a magazine dedicated to drumming, and to presenting stories on those individuals who have achieved a certain level of acclaim for their accomplishments in that field. Like it or not, Vinnie Paul and Cheron Moore—along with other drummers whose appearance in our pages has generated controversy recently—certainly meet that criteria. So, while we would most likely not print a transcription of Pantera's lyrics or a discussion of Dr. Dre's personal philosophy,

we didfeel completely justified in responding to reader requests with a cover story on Pantera's drummer and a feature on a rap drummer.

Billy Hart, Stan Lynch, Levon Helm, and Richie Hayward were included in the same issue as Vinnie Paul because we know that not all MD readers are interested in the same drummers. We can't possibly put everyone's choice of drummers into every issue—not even drummers with the stature of Mssrs. Palmer, Collins, Phillips, and White. But we work very hard to offer a well-balanced collection of stories on drummers from various playing styles and professional levels. Some readers like "artistic musicians." Others like what those readers would call "noise." That diversity is what makes the world go 'round, and it's what we must address in our selection of stories to present in Modern Drummer.

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TERRY BOZZIO

I enjoyed the Terry Bozzio cover story [July '94 *MD*] so much that I just had to drop a few lines to let you know. There was no way I could put the magazine down until I finished reading the article.

I have always liked Terry's approach to drumming and his incredible independence capacity—as well as his professional attitude towards "artistic fulfillment vs. playing stuff that sells." But he just blew me away with his approach to drumming as a way of making a living. I completely agree with his positive thinking and I'm surprised at the simple and down-to-earth way he projects himself. It is people like Terry that motivate people like me when we feel we're going to "fall off the wave."

Marie Seneca Bush Maracaibo, Venezuela



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IT'S QUESTIONABLE

continued from page 16

It's simply a matter of practice and timing. Generally the switch is made at a point in the music where the drummer isn't playing anything intricate and can keep the ride pattern going with only one hand. He or she can put the stick in the other hand down and then reach for the brushes with that hand. Then it's just a matter of finding a spot to quickly put down the remaining stick and take a brush in that hand as well. It calls for a bit of juggling, but it isn't really difficult if it's planned ahead of time.

Another, even simpler changeover can sometimes be made at the end of a musical phrase or pattern. In this case, the drummer does a cymbal roll or crash that sustains long enough to allow him or her to put both sticks down at the same time and pick up both brushes quickly. Time can be kept with the bass drum and hi-hat for the one or two beats this might take up.

Identifying Rogers Drums

I have an old Rogers set with *Swiv-O-Matic* tom holders. Could you tell me exactly how old it is and what its value might be? The set is in good condition, and includes the following drums: 14" snare (#15676, Dayton, OH); 12" tom

(#7561, Cleveland, OH); 13" tom (#69960, Fullerton, CA); 16" tom (#69952, Fullerton, CA); and 20" bass drum (#65301, Fullerton, CA). All the drums are *Power Tone* models except for the 12" tom, which is a *Banner* model. Thanks for your help.

Ken Venet Waycross, GA

Drum historian Harry Cangany responds: "A set's value depends on condition, originality, and the laws of supply and demand. You say that your drums are Powertone models except for the 12" Banner. Powertone was a later name used by Rogers; in Cleveland and Dayton drums the high-end toms and basses used the name Holiday. If the 20", 13", and 16" drums came together (which is not necessarily supported by the serial numbers) you have a variation of either the Rogers Headliner kit (20712716") or the Celebrity, Citadel, or Starlighter IV kits (22713716"). The snare drum could lend some direction as to which set you have. but, in reality, I'd guess that these units were pieced together. That's how most of us create sets.

"The term *Banner* was used on singletension snare drums, and I cannot find it in the '59, '60, '62, '64, or '67 catalogs for tom-toms. The *Tower* series, like Ludwig's *Club Dates*, had a center-mounted lug. So I'm assuming that's what you have mounted on another *Swiv-O-Matic*, suspended or in a snare stand. Rogers put stickers inside most shells. The stickers contained the serial numbers and model name. Perhaps your 12" tom was 'mislabeled.'

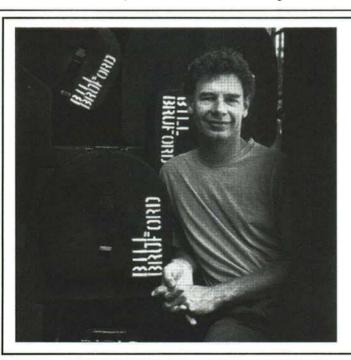
"Determining the age of your drums is easy. The California drums were made between 1969 and 1974. The Dayton snare dates from '66 to '69; the Cleveland drum was built before 1966. Determining the value of your drums is more difficult, because there are so many unknowns. (We don't know which snare drum you have, what hardware is available, if the set is plastic-covered, or if any parts are either missing or non-Rogers.) A worst-to-best-scenario range would be from \$500 to \$900."

Pat Torpey Profile

I think Pat Torpey of Mr. Big is an underrated drummer. Have you ever profiled him in *Modern Drummer*? If so, can you tell me in what issue he was covered?

Thomas Smith Los Alamitos, CA

Pat was the subject of a feature story in the June 1990 MD.



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continued from page 23

where between a straight and swing feel," you say, "Ah, *that's* the song." You have to find the feel that makes the song automatically swing—everything "swings," even if it's straight 8ths. A polka has a certain swing to it.

That's something I'm good at: finding the right feel for a given song. Anybody can do it, but when I go in I'm not given a lot of time to analyze. I'm expected to nail it fast. There are times when I'll be playing a tune that has an 8th-note swing feel. If I've got a two-beat break at the end of the second chorus, for instance, I might want to play a fill that is completely straight—almost machine like—just to add a different vibe to the track. That's a drummer's prerogative, as long as it works.

WFM: I would imagine that almost all of your work involves playing with a click of some sort. A lot of drummers have trouble playing with a good feel when they play with a click.

JR: It's very important that drummers get

comfortable with the click. There is almost always some sort of click on the projects I do. I've been doing a lot of motion picture soundtracks, and I have to be able to do it in that context as well.

WFM: Do you have a preference as to what you want to hear from a click?

JR: Usually I'll have some type of medium-pitched, no-ring cowbell playing quarter notes with no accents. I don't like accents because eight times out of ten a song turns around somewhere and the accent turns into the offbeat. That's something I don't want to deal with. Sometimes they put on a shaker that the writer feels represents the feel of the song, but I prefer just quarter notes. Even at very slow tempos, like ballads, where somebody may be prone to use an 8th- or 16th-note click, I'll have a quarter-note click. It gives me a little more flexibility between the beats.

I think the main thing that stops drummers from being able to really groove with a click is just confidence. I always say at my clinics that the click is your friend—don't be intimidated by it. Let it help you, work with it like it's another musician. It's really just a mental adjustment.

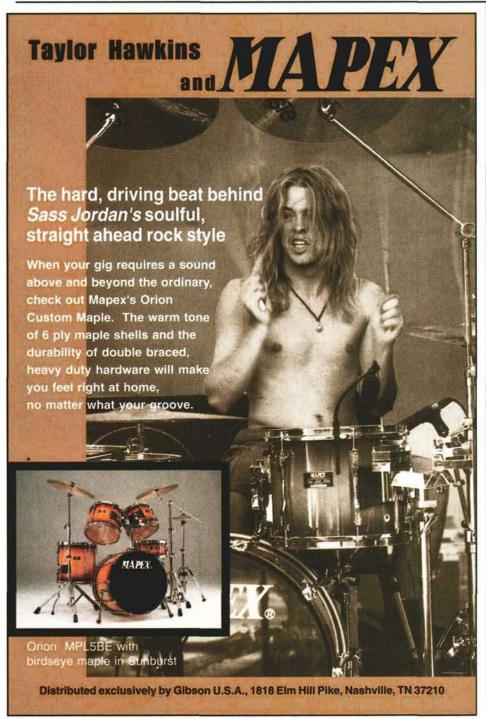
WFM: So again, a lot of it involves just being relaxed at the kit?

JR: Exactly. Tension disrupts the groove, so when I play I try to flow and not have any tension in my body. And I think that my bass drum technique allows me to play in a very relaxed manner.

WFM: What's the secret of your bass drum technique?

JR: I play flat-footed, heel down, and I release the beater off of the head. Most people play heel up, forcing the beater into the head. To play a note that way you have to first lift your whole leg. I know there are drummers who think they get a lot of power that way, but I get a huge bass drum sound with half the effort. The whole point of this concept is you don't have any tension in your leg. It's completely relaxed, and it gets the best bass drum sound.

At some point in my development I started playing heel up—I guess I was around eight years old—and I used it for awhile. Then I met Ed Soph at some summer band camp and I heard him get an incredibly loud bass drum sound out of an 18" Leedy bass drum. I said to myself, "What in the hell was that?" I watched him play, and he was playing flat-footed,









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heel down.

I asked him about it and he showed me exactly what he was doing. The secret is to start from a heel-down/toe-up position, hit the drum, and snap the foot off the head quickly. He suggested a few exercises to develop the technique, like playing simple things like quarter notes or 8th notes and reading the rhythms out of Ted Reed's *Syncopation*. He recommended that I play everything at slow tempos and at different dynamic levels.

I went through a period of awkwardness with it, but then all of a sudden I was play-

ing a gig—I was maybe fifteen years old—and it just clicked. I felt the transformation had occurred and I was able to relax and yet get more power out of my right foot. Even more importantly, it affected my groove immensely. Your bass drum is your foundation.

WFM: How tight is your pedal set? From watching the videos I've seen you do, it seems like a very loose technique.

JR: I'm using an Axis pedal now, and I've got it set at a medium-to-loose tension, and the beater comes back a good amount. I like the Axis pedal because it adjusts to

any weight distribution. I use a Danmar square wood beater, which is a little heavier than other beaters.

I've been told that I have a distinctive bass drum sound, and I have to attribute that to the beater and the technique. I think it's what has kept me working in L.A. for seventeen years! I've got my right foot insured with Lloyd's of London. [laughs] I'd recommend drummers at least experiment with this technique. It's really helped my playing.

WFM: Let's talk about your overall sound. I was surprised at how loud you play when I saw you both live and on video. I think a lot of people consider session guys as people who are too cool to break a sweat.

JR: I enjoy playing hard when it's appropriate. There is a point where you can play too hard, where you can't get any more sound out of a drum. But I'm a tall blond guy from southern Iowa who grew up playing rock 'n' roll and big band with no microphones. I've learned to play hard, yet not offensively hard. It's always a matter of getting a good sound.

WFM: I'd describe your overall sound as being big, and you use big gear. The trend over the past few years has been towards smaller drums and cymbals.

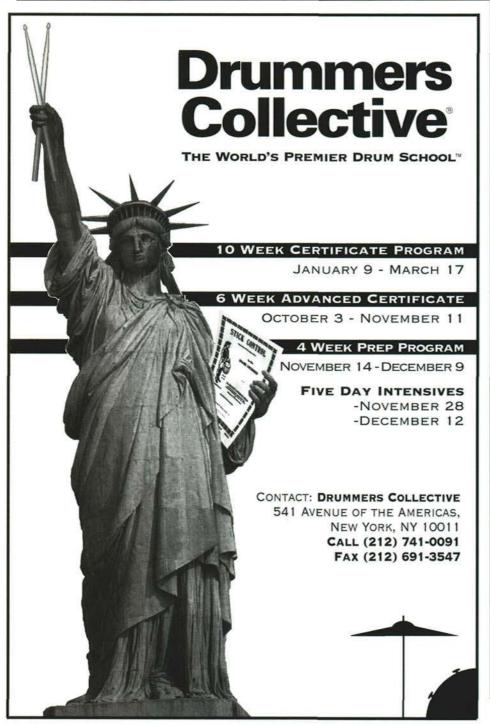
JR: Let them go that way. I like them large! I'm kind of a next generation John Bonham—with jazz training. I liked him. I've always been a rock 'n' roll drummer, although I've never had the opportunity to join a rock band. But I enjoyed Bonham's feel, and I really like Led Zeppelin. I think that metal began and ended with that group.

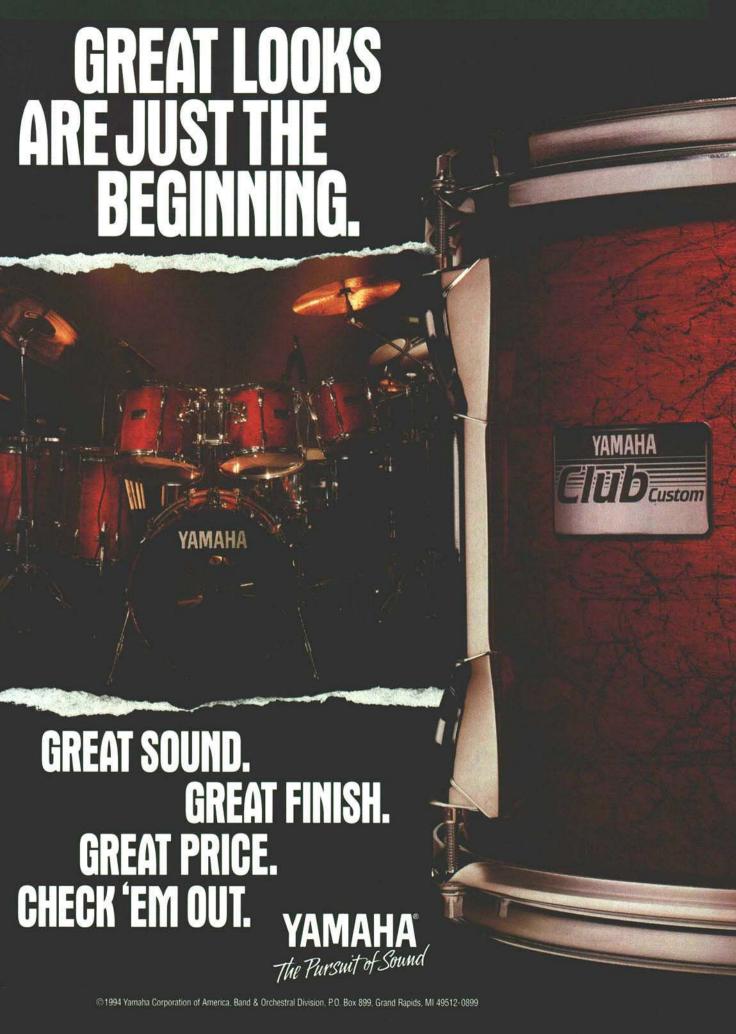
I use 24" bass drums. I can tune that size bass drum any way. I can get a little bebop sound out of a 24" or I can get a real massive open-ended Bonham sound. I use large toms in the studio because I feel that the way I tune the bass drum, which is quite low, the deeper toms tend to work better in conjunction with the bass drum.

WFM: What about snare drums? I've heard that you own over fifty vintage drums.

JR: I do own a few! My basic snare would be a Pearl 6 1/2x14. I'm workingwith Pearl on some custom drums that are going to be coming out, some in 4" depths.

I own a lot of vintage Ludwigs, though, and I plan to get a lot more as soon as the







prices go down. Everybody wants vintage gear now—I think it's partially my fault.

WFM: There *is* a big interest in vintage drums these days.

JR: I know, and now I can't afford them, they're too damn expensive. There's something about Ludwigs made before World War II—their snare drums were totally happening. The metals were different and their drums were different. It's like a fine wine or a classic car. There's something very special about those drums.

I played a drum on the Streisand tour that was a prototype from Pearl. It's a 6 1/2 brass that looks very similar to an old 1930 Ludwig snare drum. It sounds unbelievable. I'm digging it heavily. It's got the crack *and* the depth. You can tune it up very high or you can get the fatness out of it.

WFM: With all of the different drums you own, how do you decide which one to use on a session? How much say do you have regarding the sound of your drums?

JR: I have total input. I try to work closely with the artist, the engineer, and the producer to get the best sound for the track. I think I have a reputation for working hard to get the appropriate drum sound for a song.

I used a custom 4x15 snare drum on some tracks on the recent Peter Frampton record. It sounded great in that particular room on that particular track. I try to use a drum that I feel will complement the tune. That drum was built for me; we patterned it after a 1922 *Black Beauty*. I've got a lot of 15" snare drums.

WFM: Snares have tended to get smaller, with a lot of drummers using 13s. That 15" has got to be like playing a satellite dish.

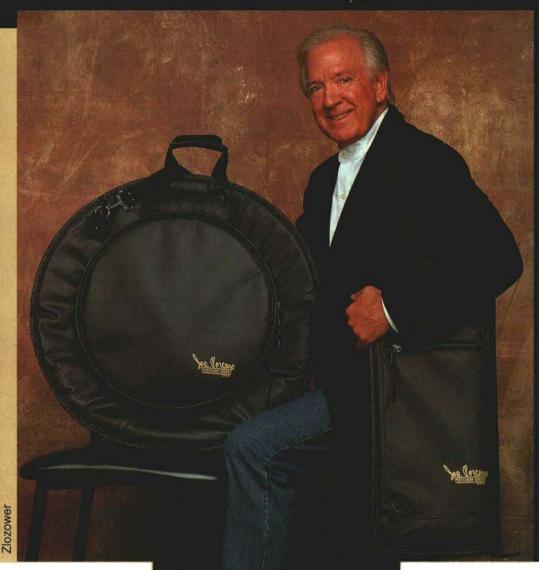
JR: Ironically, in the old, old days—back in the '30s—a lot of 15" drums were made. Remo makes 15" heads, so it's definitely a concept that works, and it sounds great.

WFM: What about selecting cymbals for a particular track?

JR: To give you an idea of what I'll go through to get the right sound on a track, I recently did this thing with Don Henley and Elton John, "Standing On Shaky Ground," for Elton's *Duets* record. I did a ride cymbal overdub. I must have gone through twenty ride cymbals for Henley. That's the type of thing I have to be prepared to do to satisfy an artist or producer.



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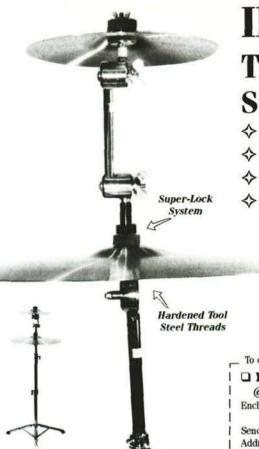
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WFM: What about the question of muffling in the studio?

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JR: The only thing I like to muffle are exwives. [laughs] But seriously, I'm really quite primitive and simple when it comes to muffling drums. I take a regular packing blanket and cut it into fourths, and I take one of those sections and lay it flat inside the bass drum so it doesn't puff up anywhere. It just barely touches the front and back heads.

On tom-toms, I don't use any muffling. I have triggers on all my drums, but on snare drums you have to attach the trigger to the head. Sometimes that alone is enough muffling for the snare. I sometimes use those old Rogers clip-on mufflers. Remember those from the old days? They work great because you can adjust them so they'll just barely touch the head. I don't like rings. I like to be able to get to any part of the snare drum without that ring flapping up on me.

WFM: We've talked briefly about your equipment, but we didn't mention that earlier this year you surprised a few people in the industry when you left Yamaha to go with Pearl.

JR: I had been with Yamaha for fourteen years, since late 1980, when I first went to Japan with Quincy Jones. I signed a deal over there, which was an international deal. They were very supportive through the years, but I felt it was odd that they never ran a solo acoustic advertisement with me. I've played on a lot of hit records—truthfully, more than any other drummer—so I was wondering where their focus was. Obviously they were focused on the flavor-of-the-month drummer or "Mr. Jazz-Flurry Soloist."

What really bothered me was that they stopped their clinic program, or I should say they cut it back to essentially just one guy. In the early days I did several clinics for them—they even flew me over to Japan for a few. My whole point about drumming is that we've got to educate and get more kids into drumming. I love to teach. I come from a family of teachers. I felt that Yamaha cutting their clinic program was a slap in my face.

I was also disappointed with Yamaha because they wouldn't manufacture a snare drum design I had. It was a 4x15 birch snare patterned after a 1922 *Black*



Beauty. Yamaha was making artist snares for a lot of guys, but they wouldn't put this drum out. I got the run-around from them and they just didn't do it.

Pearl will be making a 4x15 snare drum, plus we are going to be making a 4x14, both maple and birch, with the design ideas I have. It's going to really excite some people because the drum sounds so good.

WFM: And Pearl is heading in a direction you want to go?

JR: Pearl's new Masters Series drums are just burning. They're only 4-ply and they

sound great. There are shades of Bonham coming out of my kick drum, which really makes me feel good, because I couldn't get that sound out of the Yamaha bass drum. The Yamaha bass drum sounded very good and clean, but the Pearl bass drum just buries them. I had been playing Yamaha drums for all those years and I had absolutely no transitional problems switching drum companies.

WFM: Let's change subjects and talk about a topic that is very important to any studio drummer: consistency of sound. What are your thoughts on developing a

consistent sound?

JR: It's really just a matter of concentration. The three things you need to focus on for consistency are location, attack, and release. It's a combination of where and how hard you're hitting a drum or cymbal. In studio work you want to make sure you're hitting the snare drum in the same area. If you're off a half an inch you're going to get a different ring out of the drum and it's going to make the sound thinner.

One thing that annoys me about some drummers is that they have inconsistent cross-stick sounds—lately I've been hearing some terrible cross-stick. They don't seem to have that exact distance from the butt-end of the stick to where it strikes the rim. They're either too choked up or too long, and they don't snap the stick so it "pops."

WFM: Could you recommend one of your recordings where you got a good crossstick sound?

JR: "We Are The World" was one. Actually, on the new Frampton record there is some really nice cross-stick stuff interspersed with snare drum.

WFM: Do you set up your kit in any particular way to assist engineers to record it better?

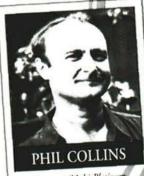
JR: That's a great question. There are a lot of drummers who have a whole lot of stuff on their kits, which is cool, but it makes the job tougher on the engineer. I come in with a very simple setup: bass drum, two rack toms, usually one floor tom, a hi-hat, a crash on the left, a ride on the right, and another crash. If the track calls for something more, I have it with me, but I don't immediately set up everything I own. With my set engineers have an easy access point for the mic' to get to the snare drum, the bass drum, and the hi-hat so it can be isolated from the snare drum.

In modern recording things happen fast. Let's say you're doing a motion-picture date and there are sixty-five people on the sound stage. You don't want to be bringing in this elaborate kit when they're also having to mike a whole bunch of violins.

WFM: What about more specific things, like not mounting your toms on the bass drum? I've heard of engineers who prefer to have them off the drum so there won't be any chance of sympathetic vibrations.

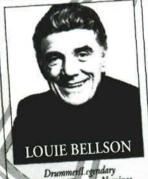
JR: Those guys are nuts. I don't know

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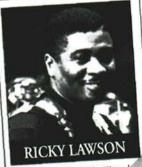
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what they're hearing. They've got radar ears! I don't ever notice that. I find it easier to adjust toms if they're mounted on the bass drum.

WFM What about cymbal placement?

JR: Cymbal placement is *very* important. When I moved to Boston from Iowa in 1973, there were a lot of jazz drummers who had their cymbals really high. Alphonse Mouzon was popular then, and he used to have his ride cymbal about as high as the stand would take it. You needed a telescope to see it! [laughs] After you'd hit the ride a couple of times all the blood ran down to your triceps and your arm was dead. But it looked cool.

The whole point about cymbal positioning is that you want to be able to sit comfortably when playing them. I sit with my legs at a 90° angle, and I have my cymbals at eye level. The ride cymbal is positioned so I don't have to raise my arm too much. I try to position the cymbals so they're at a point where the stick naturally comes down—a natural extension of my arm.

One thing I stress with crash cymbals—and a lot of drummers don't do this—is to not clamp them down to tight. If you hit a cymbal and the felt washer on top is impeding the natural movement of the cymbal, then it's too tight. I take a razor blade and cut the top felt washer in half so it just rests on the cymbal, but isn't forced down. Cymbals sound better that way, and you'll find that they'll last a whole lot longer.

WFM: I'd like to get your thoughts on the mental preparation you do for session work. A little earlier you used the expression "going for the throat." What's that about?

JR: I play a lot of basketball, and "going for the throat" is the attitude you have when it's time to play a big game—you put on your game face. Remember the look Magic [Johnson] had in his eyes when the Lakers played? Well, it's that same attitude.

I know that when I go in to record I may be making history, so I rise to the challenge. I go for the throat. I want to achieve the ultimate, which is to make the song greater than it is. What I play doesn't have to be perfect; it just has to enhance the song.

WFM: What happens when you're dealing with someone who has you playing

multiple takes? How do you keep focused? **JR:** That's tough. On Bob Seger's *Like A Rock* album some of those songs involved twenty-five takes. Bob wouldn't allow me to use high-pitched snare drums, so I was using fat-sounding drums. *You* try to drive a drum that hard twenty-five takes in a row—it's like driving a truck with bad steering! But you have to isolate yourself and challenge your own mindset. Don't freak yourself out about things. In those situations I just try to stay relaxed, understate things, and not overplay.

There are times when you're in a situa-

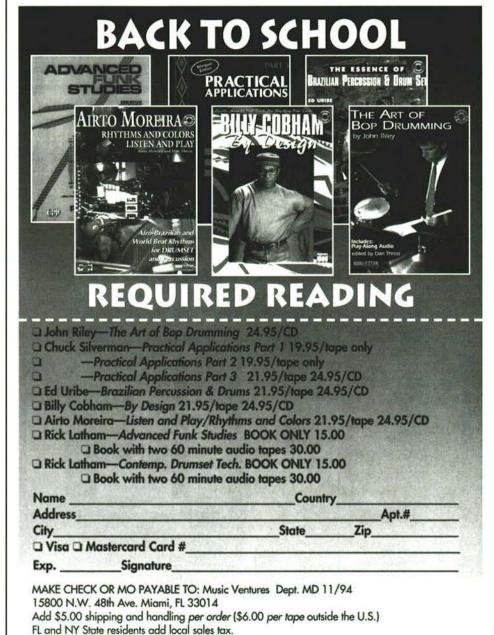
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tion and you're doing multiple takes. By the time any drummer has learned the song he automatically gets bored and starts experimenting. You start wanting to change certain things, whereas the first spontaneous take may have been better. By the third or fourth take you've questioned your spontaneity and added a couple of more things.

This all gets down to the producer. You'll find that some producers are better than others. Some will be "tweezoids," and they'll want you to go way out on a limb, but then they'll take you back to





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what you played on the first take. The ultimate producer is one who understands what's required.

WFM: How is Quincy Jones to work for? JR: Quincy is brilliant. He's very understated. He won't come out and expound on an idea. He'll say one or two things that will absolutely make the track click for you. He has so much magic. As a matter of fact, out of all the producers I've ever worked for, he is the king of magic. I've never experienced anything else like it.

When we were doing those records we knew when we walked into that room that there was magic floating in the air. It was absolutely amazing. We knew that we were about to play on something that was going to sell twenty-five million units. We just knew. I don't know what it was, but there was just something there.

WFM: With all the sessions that you do I would imagine there's a lot of reading involved. How difficult is the reading on a high-level session?

JR: It can vary. There are times when I'll have an exact, precise drum part. Other times it might be just a lead sheet. I almost prefer just having the chord changes. I like

reading chord symbols when I play drums because it helps me "see" the song.

Movie charts are very precise. With jingles, like the Honda stuff I do, there may be an exact part written out, but I totally ignore it and play what I want. On record dates, if somebody has written a part out, I'll listen to the demo first to see if the part works.

The Streisand gig involved a lot of reading. I've always prided myself on being a great reader, but this gig was a challenge. It wasn't like I was reading odd meters or changing meters, going from seventeen to thirteen to whatever. But some of the charts were very long—the music was draping off the sides of two music stands! Plus it wasn't like being on a session with just a few other musicians. I was on stage with sixty-five people and it was imperative that I set up the figures in just the right way. It's the concept of getting an orchestra to phrase together, and I felt that was my responsibility.

WFM: Since you mentioned the Streisand gig, I was surprised when I first heard you were doing it, because you're known as a studio guy. What got you on the road?

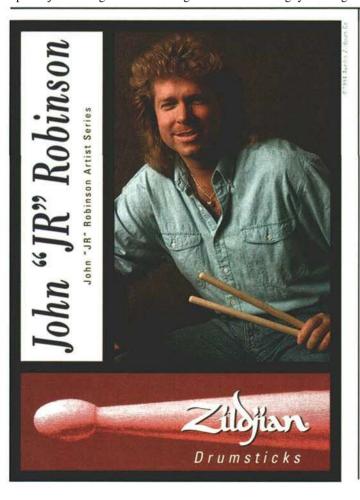
JR: There were several reasons. I got called to work with her for one gig in 1992, right before Clinton was elected, at the Fields' mansion in Beverly Hills. We did about eight songs. I've always respected her, but after this thing in '92 I realized just how talented this woman is as a performer—she simply has an incredible voice.

I then got the call to do her "Concert Of The Century" in Las Vegas, which was in the fourth quarter of '93. At that point nobody expected her to tour, and that gig wasn't going to conflict with any of my studio work. We went into rehearsal in early December with the sixty-five piece band. It was all organized with the best **L.A.** players, from first violin all the way down. It was burning.

WFM: At that point you were thinking it was just going to be in Vegas?

JR: Right, just two shows. I did hear a rumor that there was a possibility that if this thing took off they might tour. But we did Las Vegas and it was absolutely smokin'. And that might have been one of the reasons she decided to do the tour.

I got the call the end of February. I real-





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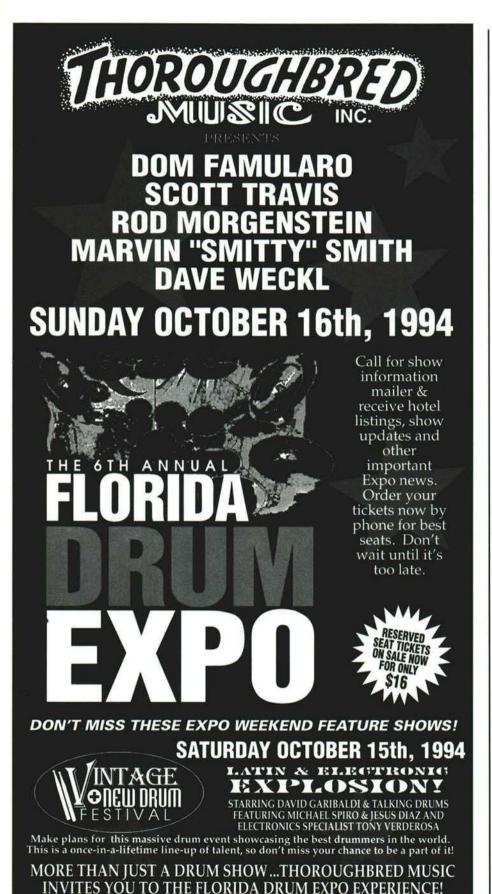
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ly had to think about it because I knew I'd be giving some things up to do the tour, but I liked the challenge of the gig. The money was also very good. Plus, she has announced that this is the last tour she's ever going to do, and I thought it would be a good thing to be involved in another historic musical moment, which is what it was. We're hearing that there's a possibility that a recorded version of the concert will be released, and it's nice to be a part of that, too.

For the tour the decision was made to use five L.A. people and then hire the rest of the orchestra in the different areas we'd be playing. We went into rehearsal in April in New York with the New York orchestra. Then we went to London and rehearsed with the London orchestra, then came back and rehearsed again with the New York orchestra—all before we did a single gig! This has been called "the concert," but I jokingly called it "the rehearsal." I never rehearsed so much for anything in my life. Barbra and the musical director, Marvin Hamlish, are both perfectionists.

WFM: What was it like playing with a huge orchestra? This gig seemed to be on the other end of the spectrum from what you normally do.

JR: No expense was spared on the tour, so I had an amazing setup. I was surrounded by a *Plexiglass* cage. The rhythm section had custom-fitted ear monitors. I had my own personal mix, and everything sounded great. It was like being in my own studio. I had everything I wanted at my beck and call.

WFM: I suppose to get you out of the studio, this was the only way you'd do it.

JR: That's right. This was a precise, polished gig. I think I would have preferred the music to be a bit heavier—more rock or R&B. There were times when I wasn't playing at all. There were times when I'd just be doing cymbal swells or traditional brush patterns. There were times when I'd be playing some "big" drums, like on "Somewhere," which David Foster arranged. And some of it required me to swing real hard. So while it may not have seemed like the type of thing I would normally do, I did the gig because it wasn't the norm for me. That made it even more satisfying.

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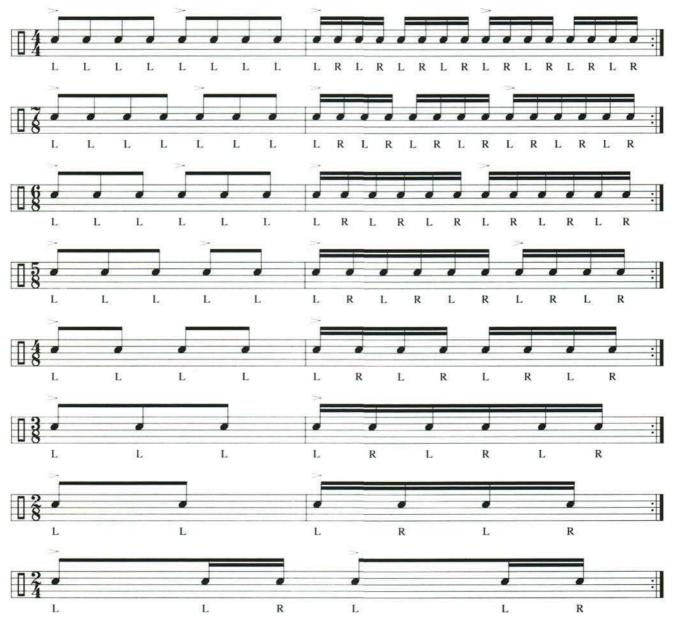
Developing The Left Hand

by Joe Morello Transcribed by Marvin Burock



The following exercise was originally given to me by my teacher, George Lawrence Stone. It's one of the great exercises for developing the left or "weak" hand. (For the left-handed drummer, the right hand is the weaker hand.)

This exercise should be practiced slowly at first, paying close attention to the accents. The exercise should eventually be played starting with either hand in order to achieve an equal balance between hands. A similar version of this exercise (without accents) appears in my book *Master Studies* on page 75. Many of my students have had great results with this exercise, and I'm sure you'll find it helpful, too. Have fun.



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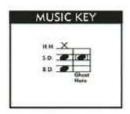
In *Joe Porcaro On Drums*, Joe presents methods which he teaches privately at P.I.T., and includes the demonstration and discussion of orchestrated cymbal turnarounds, Tehais, drum fills, odd groupings, and Joe's famous hand and finger techniques. The video also features Joe and his great trio which includes Kenny Wild (bass), and Tom Ranier (piano).

Level: Intermediate-Pro / Running Time: 65 minutes.



On Feel

by Mike Marble



Have you ever wondered why certain drummers are more comfortable to listen to than others? How ten drummers could play the same groove and all sound different? I've thought about this for many years. I've read countless interviews with famous drummers and I've talked with

musicians I know and respect. Although generally speaking everyone uses the same words, I think that many different ideas are being expressed.

If ever there were a vague and argumentative topic among drummers, "feel" is it! The definition we want cannot be found in Webster's dictionary. I believe the type of feel we are discussing is composed of many different aspects, first and foremost of these being *time*. Uh oh...another cloudy concept. Well, let's see....

Most players will agree that there are three basic approaches to time: ahead (on top), behind (laid-back), and dead-on. In other words, a drummer playing with an ahead style will create the impression of moving forward or slightly rushing, although the tempo remains basically static. A laid-back approach will create the opposite effect—one of playing in a hot, hazy room after a big dinner and a couple of cold ones. Dead-on means no implied movement at all.

These intellectual concepts can easily be observed. Set a metronome to around 40 b.p.m., and start playing quarter notes on a pad. If the sound of the click disappears, you're hitting the pad precisely at the same instant as the metronome is sounding. This is dead-on. If there is a slight flam being formed between your note and the metronome's, and your note is first, that's on top. If your note is slightly after the click, that's laid-back.

As long as there's some type of objective time reference present (metronome, click-track, drum machine), it is relatively easy to tell what type of "time feel" a drummer is playing with. But what happens when there is no objective time reference? People will still observe this aspect of feel. How is this possible? Doesn't the drummer now *become* the reference?

One explanation is that the hi-hat or ride cymbal becomes the "objective time reference" for the listener, and that deviations between the limb that is delineating the time on the cymbal and the other three limbs will be perceived as feel variations. *What?* Okay, take the groove at the top of the next column as an example:

In this groove, the right hand is playing 8th notes on the ride cymbal. To the listener, these cymbal notes might act as metronome clicks, against which the placement of snare and bass notes could be evaluated. Is the snare slightly ahead of the corre-



sponding cymbal note, or a hair behind? Is the bass drum note on the "e" of 2 precisely in the middle of the surrounding cymbal notes (the 2 and the "&" of 2)? Or is it early? Or late? Most people wouldn't be able to articulate these differences in analytical terms, but they would still voice an opinion about the "feel" of the drummer playing the groove.

Another explanation of how time feel can be perceived even without an objective reference being present could be called the "Circular Theory of Time." Imagine a wheel spinning at a given speed—let's say 60 r.p.m. Although you could get ten different people to agree on the speed of rotation, the place on the wheel they each choose as the end of one rotation and the start of the next could vary. For example, one person might call 12:00 the starting point, another might choose 11:00, and yet another 1:00. If we shift this analogy back to musical time, the spinning wheel represents our inner sense of tempo or pulse. Feeling downbeats at 12:00 would correspond to "dead-on," 11:00 to "on top," and 1:00 to "laid back."

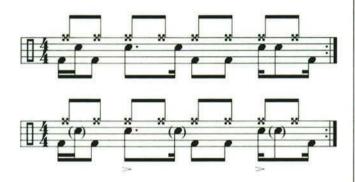
Another factor in perceived time feel is the sound of the drums and cymbals being played. Is the snare "fat" or "cracky?" Is the drummer riding on a pair of hi-hat cymbals that are being held tightly together, or loosely? Is the kick drum going through a "large room" reverb, or is it dry with a lot of high-midrange "slap"? *All other factors remaining constant*, I believe that legato (long) sounds will create a laid-back feel, whereas staccato (short) sounds will give the opposite impression.

The other musicians you are playing with can have a strong effect on your perceived feel. Let's say that it's your first time playing with a band (subbing for their long-time drummer). Even if it's strictly a cover band playing songs you've played hundreds of times with other people, each band will have its own unique tempo for each song. It can be tricky not to create some kind of "feel friction" because of disagreements between the tempo you're accustomed to and what the rest of the band has decided on over the months or years of playing that song.

Let's say that the song is "Two Princes" by the Spin Doctors, and the band you are subbing with is used to a tempo of about 110 b.p.m. You've played that song a lot with another band at a tempo of roughly 104 b.p.m. Even if another bandmember counts the song off, and you stick right to his or her tempo, you'll probably be feeling an internal tug to slow it down a few notches—back to the tempo you're used to. In this case the other players might get the impression you were playing with a laid-back feel, even if you nor-

mally play "on top."

Another important factor in a drummer's feel is the level of dynamic variation: accents, crescendos, decrescendos, and overall differences along the loud-soft continuum. Look at the following two patterns. They are rhythmically identical, but to me, the second one would groove much harder. It would *feel* better and sound more musical because of the use of accents and ghost notes.



Remember the teacher in ninth grade who always put you to sleep? I would guess that he or she spoke in a monotone (didn't use dynamic variations in the tone of voice) while lecturing the class on the rise of oligopolies in 20th-century capitalist economies. Effective speakers get louder and softer and emphasize certain words more than others to get and maintain your interest. The same is true for musicians. The use of dynamics allows us to express emotion through our playing. Be aware of the world around you, and you will perceive grooves everywhere, from your heartbeat to the pounding of surf on a beach to the financial rhythms of the stock market. All of these "grooves of nature" incorporate dynamics, or shadings of intensity. Why should our drumming be an exception to this?

Your familiarity with what you're playing will strongly affect your feel. Let's say that you just learned a new groove that you saw in the current issue of *Modern Drummer*. That night at your gig, you try to use this new groove during a song in the first set. During the break after the set, the bass player comments to you that something "felt stiff during that song. You're bummed, because you had been excited to use the new groove to spice up a song that was getting old to you after playing it one hundred times or so. Why didn't it work? You hadn't *internalized* the pattern yet. You hadn't spent enough time with it for it to be automatic. Generally speaking, the more time you've spent "working out the kinks" of a groove, the better it will feel—both to you and to the listener.

Who you are as a person will also strongly influence your feel on the drums. Where you grew up, your family culture, your educational background, your age, your internal belief system—all of these contribute to your musical character in ways that are both subtle and obvious. I've heard it said that, *generally speaking*, drummers who are from urban areas in the northeastern part of the U.S. will tend to feel more "on top" than their southern rural counterparts.

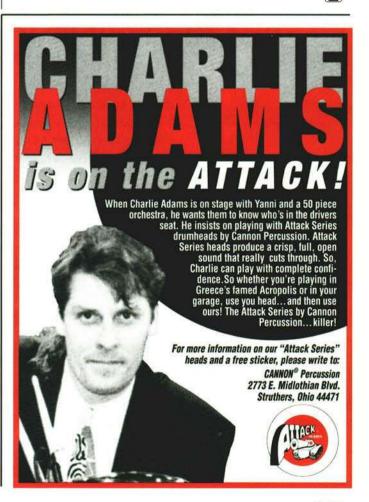
It makes sense to me that the pace of life and other environmental factors can greatly influence a drummer's feel. These factors

affect our style of speech, so why not the way we play? If, as a person, you attach great significance to being punctual in your daily dealings with others, and associate extreme anxiety with being even a tad late to an appointment, might not these feelings carry over into the way you perceive time in *musical* situations?

Please don't misunderstand me. I'm not making absolute judgments about the value of one type of feel over another. I once heard Peter Erskine say, "If you study music, practice your instrument, and perform, eventually you will arrive at a way of playing that is your own." I believe that our value as players does not depend on some set-in-stone objective standard. This to me is one of the most beautiful aspects of music.

The beauty of a drummer's playing lies in the ear of the beholder. When I listen to a great drummer play, it is a spiritual experience for me. At that level of playing, the musician is "tapping into" something far greater than himself, and uses that power to express himself through the drums.

I had the honor of studying with Gary Chester just before he died, and he talked about this most important and intangible aspect of feel as the "Zen of drumming." I understand this to mean reaching the point where there ceases to be any separation between drums and drummer, and the player expresses the love of the universe in his or her own unique way with total honesty in the moment. It's something to aspire to.







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continued from page 27

you're on stage you want to exaggerate your movements, like an actor in a stage play as opposed to an actor in a motion picture. There's nothing wrong with a drummer going out and entertaining-lead singers and guitar players do it all the time.

"At the Acropolis I was playing to a Greek audience, and few people spoke English. I wanted to have fun trying to make contact with the audience. With the way the setup was with me so far back, I really had to think about the movement. It was a universal communication. I guess I'm a basic ham half the time—that's what my mom always says—but I have fun when I play drums! And somehow, if you can get that across to the audience and it's genuine, it'll work." Through his enthusiasm and energy, along with the images that he conjures up from his forays through jazz and rock styles. Adams involves the audience, even getting them to clap along to his accelerating singlestroke roll.

The video closeups during Charlie's drum solo were a drummer's dream. Credit for the amazing coverage goes to six-time Emmy award winner George Veras, head of CBS Sports and the man responsible for the Olympic Games from Lillehammer. He and his crew used fourteen cameras, including a "drum cam." Adams chuckles as he recalls, "They called it the 'point of view' camera. It's about the size of a big vitamin pill, and they actually taped it to the rack above me. I couldn't pay for a video like that!"

Adams' drum solo is built around what he calls a "Table Of Contents." "You have to take the audience through a story," he elaborates. "I actually structure it, but I still have plenty of room for improvisation. It depends on how I feel that night. I knew that I was going to start off with a 7/8 tom-tom lick, into a 4/4 tom-tom rhythm, into the snare drum work with all the rudiments, into buzz rolls that went down dynamically very soft, into a cymbal rhythm with the hi-hats, into a really heavy rock beat, into a 9/8 double kick thing, and finally into the big single-stroke roll at the end. It was being recorded and I knew it was going to be on the video. I

didn't want to go out there haphazardly and say, 'I hope I have good ideas tonight.'"

Even Yanni agrees: "When Charlie does his drum solo, it's like an orchestral piece—all the drums and all the voices come together. He makes a song out of his drum solo, and that is very uncommon. He has a sensibility. And I know when he thinks in terms of playing with me he doesn't think just drums, he thinks music. He has a way of making the drums sing."

"I think I solo much better on a fourpiece kit," insists Charlie. "Instead of thinking about hitting so many different drums and cymbals, I really go back to the basics. I think more dynamically; I think more about rhythm changes. It's like a keyboard player who's got a million keyboards and synthesizers—or just one piano. I always thought that the best drummers I ever saw were the guys with just a four-piece kit. The tonalities that Max Roach got out of a four- or five-piece kit, or Buddy Rich, Gene Krupa, Elvin Jones, John Bonham, or Ian Paice. It seems like almost all of my favorite drummers had

simpler kits."

While he prefers soloing on a smaller kit, Charlie understands why someone would use something a bit larger. "I'm using the orchestral kit with Yanni because I need all the different instruments for the songs. I need symphony chimes, samples, electronics, exotic percussion, and gongs. I need a marching snare and a normal snare and a piccolo snare."

Would he rather create his solo in a recording studio or with an audience? "I like it better live," Adams responds without a moment's hesitation, "because I thrive off the audience's energy. They spur me on. I do enough studio things with Yanni and a few other artists, so there are enough session things for me to do when I'm not on the road. In the studio, I always feel it's just a little bit too planned and a little bit too clever. I have about twenty Buddy Rich albums, and the solos he did in the studio were never as good to me as his live solos. I think that's true of every drummer, whether it was Ian Paice in Deep Purple or Carl Palmer in ELP. I think live albums are better than studio





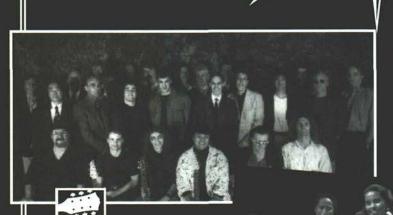
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albums because it's real.

"I remember one solo Buddy Rich did with the Boston Pops. They did a West Side Story medley. They played almost all the great Bernstein songs from West Side Story—except one. And in the middle of his solo Buddy was doing buzz rolls, and all of a sudden I was hearing duh-duh-dadum," Charlie begins to sing the melody to "I Feel Pretty." "He was doing the melody on drums! And I thought, what a great idea! Because singing songs in your head would give you so many ideas rhythmically. I used to sit down for hours and just analyze some of Buddy's solos. I imagine that all the great drummers think of melodies when soloing.

"Another thing I enjoyed about Buddy's soloing was his use of dynamics. To me the most interesting thing about music—after the melody, the chords, and the rhythms—are the dynamics. Maybe that's why I was always a sucker for classical music. I just *love* when they'd be playing double *forte* and then turn right around a second later and play *pianissimo*. It's much more emotional. And Buddy Rich was like that on drums—when he played a drum solo, the dynamic range was unbelievable.

"I read an article where Buddy said he thought like a horn player—he would breathe. On drums, you're capable of playing note after note after note and never stopping. To me that gets boring. Buddy would stop and start all the time as if he ran out of breath, as if he were a saxophone player. And I think that's why his phrasing was so much better than everybody else."

With the success of the recent Yanni video, Charlie is being recognized as a great soloist himself. "You know what's funny? This 'success' we've been having has helped me out so much because it's given me validity. All of sudden I'm not a new age drummer. People now have seen that there's a symphony, a real bass player, drum solos—we *play*. We're not new age music. I hated being in that category."

While Adams has a great deal of technique, at this point in his playing it's not the most important element. "Drummers playing today have more chops than ever before, *but*," he pauses for emphasis



before continuing, "I don't think they have as much style as they did twenty or thirty years ago. Maybe drummers will be mad at me for saying this, but when I hear Buddy Rich, there's a style. How about John Bonham with Zeppelin, Stewart Copeland with the Police, Max Roach, Ginger Baker, or Ringo? When I heard them play, even before the vocals came in, I knew who it was by the way they tuned their drums, how they played—their style. I think music has become very homogenized now, especially in the pop scene. I tell all my students that the hardest thing they are ever going to achieve isn't learning all the rudiments or all the technique it's actually coming up with a style."

Adams' fluency in odd-meter rhythms may be a defining characteristic of *his* style. He also has a unique sound characterized by a tight, higher-pitched snare drum (a la Buddy Rich) and lots of jazz-influenced cymbal work. Known for using a lot of press rolls, double-strokes, and rudiments, Adams can also turn around and lay down a heavy, solid groove. He shrugs his shoulders and tries to explain:

"I've always seemed to be caught in between. I was influenced by Krupa, Rich, and Roach on the jazz end. Then on the rock end it was John Bonham, Ian Paice, and Carl Palmer. In a lot of the rock 'n' roll bands I was in, they said, 'You're playing too jazzy.' And then when I was in jazz bands, they said, 'You're playing too rock 'n' roll.' I suppose my style with Yanni is probably the most all-around because I get to draw from the classical side; I get to draw from the Middle Eastern ethnic rhythms and odd time signatures; I get to play jazzy and I get to play rock. Maybe that's why it's a satisfying gig-because I get to do a little bit of everything!

"Even groups have their own style. What would Cream have sounded like without Ginger Baker? What would the Beatles have sounded like without Ringo? You can tell from Yanni's music that he's not from America because he uses Middle Eastern scales and modes, and, of course, the odd time signatures. Besides that, our band changed ever since we added Ricc Fierabracci on bass. He's the best bass



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player I've ever worked with. And when we got Karen Briggs on violin doing her incredible jazz solos, it changed again. All of a sudden, with Shardad Rohani conducting and arranging the orchestra, it really became a collaboration."

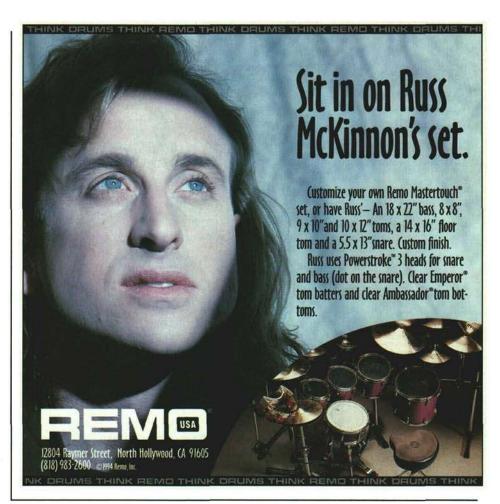
The unique camaraderie that this collaboration produced is evident by the relaxed way the musicians talked with each other on the bus after one particular concert. When asked what she thought of Adams as a band member, violinist Karen Briggs replies, "With Charlie, it's cool. I've worked with a lot of drummers, and there's one thing about Charlie: He's consistent, man. He catches licks that I do and enhances them by the type of beats and rhythms he puts behind them, and I appreciate that immensely!"

Apart from the style and sound of the group, how did Adams develop his own sound? "By listening," Charlie comments. "I would recommend to all drummers that they listen to as many people as they can because then they won't sound like just one person. If they can draw from enough influences, maybe they'll be lucky enough to come out with that unique style."

Conductor Shardad Rohani says, "Charlie's playing reminds me of big band jazz meets heavy metal! It's not just his technique; he's so interesting to watch." Ward Darrett, formerly with Ludwig and one of The people responsible for signing up Adams to play Ludwig drums, describes him as "a Buddy Rich devotee. He took this conventional big-band style and adapted it to Yanni's music. He's great!"

Adams himself acknowledges The debt to his idol, Buddy Rich. "I think I was born in the wrong era. The first lime I saw Buddy play was when I was a freshman in high school, and I was just mesmerized. He made it look loo easy, but you knew you couldn't do it like him. I would have loved to have been playing in The big band era when there were no drum machines and the studios weren't as slick. There are some things I don't like about technology today. It's taken away some style." He sighs wistfully. Even his concert attire reflects his style of the past—from two-lone shoes to a 1930s-era suit and lie.

For a man who longs for the musical days of yesteryear, Charlie Adams' setup



consists not only of top-quality acoustic drums and cymbals, but also state-of-theart electronic equipment. "I had to embrace the technology," he explains, "because I knew it wasn't going to go away. If I wanted to be a working drummer, I had to go out and learn drum machines and sampling and all the electronics. I'd rather have me get paid to program a drum machine than some keyboard player or guitar player. And drummers can program drum machines better than guitar players and keyboard players, if they just learn it. You know where the drum machine's really helped me? I use it as a metronome. It really made my timing bet-

"It's a great tool if you use it in a positive way. I don't like it when a drum machine replaces a drummer; I don't like when a synthesizer replaces a violin player. That's why I'm so happy we have a symphony with us. We're not replacing strings, we're trying to accomplish a marriage between electronics and acoustics. Instead of trying to replace violin players, we're saying, 'Here's a nice electronic

sound *blended* with a beautiful violin sound. Here's a nice acoustic drum sound put together with a really cool sampled sound.' We're just trying to have more colors. But if somebody gave me the power tomorrow to eliminate every computer and drum machine, I'd do it! Then everybody would have to go back and just *play.*"

Charlie's love of his instrument and profession is apparent not only when he talks about his equipment, but also by his actions when he's not on tour. He enjoys teaching private lessons, which gives him the ability to work one-on-one with other drummers, and he believes in giving numerous clinics each year in order to expose young people to the joys of drumming and music.

"As a teacher, I sometimes have students who can play things I can't play as well. But I'm like a director of a movie. My job is to direct the person with this great talent and say, Try it this way. Or try it that way.' And guess what? That person *is* going to play it better than I play it. But my job isn't to play things better than

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everybody; my job is to let that individual realize his or her own hidden potential. I think that's a teacher's responsibility.

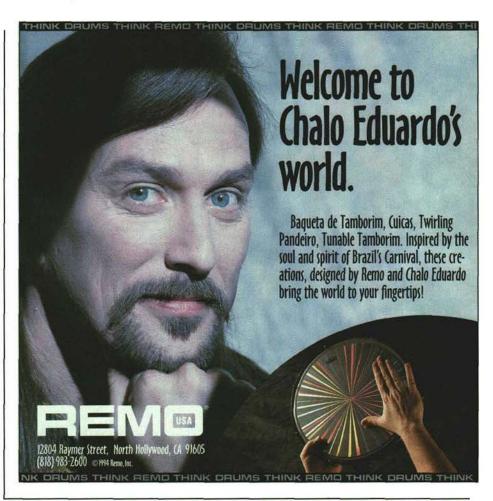
"I don't compete with drummers. I'm happy when another drummer gets the gig and does great. And as a teacher, I don't sit there and keep secrets. When a student asks how I did a certain lick, I show it. Before I began taking lessons with Phil Stanger at Frank's Drum Shop in Chicago, I took lessons from another teacher who was the kind of guy who didn't want to show you anything. He'd show you just enough to get your money. That's not a good teacher. Phil, on the other hand, is a great teacher.

"Besides Phil, I also took lessons with Marv Dahlgren, who plays with the Minnesota Symphony. And when I was in Los Angeles, my teacher was Eddie Shaughnessy from the *Tonight Show*. When I first moved to Nashville, I wanted to take lessons from Larrie Londin; and it was a shame that he passed away. There's always somebody to learn from. So when I get back from a tour, I want to get back with a teacher, start taking lessons, and get my reading skills better again—and, of course, get back with my own students."

One former student of whom Adams is particularly proud is Jimmy Chamberlin of Smashing Pumpkins. "I just want to say," confides Adams, "that the most fulfilling thing about being a teacher is seeing somebody like Jimmy. He had a feature article in *Modern Drummer* a few months ago [January 1994], and he mentioned me as his teacher. That was the payoff for me—to watch one of my students really do it. He's a great drummer. It was really gratifying.

"When I'm not on the road, all I really want to do is teach. I have a lot of private students. I always tell my students how important it is to read. It's cool when all of a sudden you hear a song on the radio and you can *see* the notes in your head. And at the same time, when you're looking at the music and seeing the notes, you can *hear* the music in your head. I have some students with really good chops who are coming to me just to learn how to read because they don't want to be handicapped anymore.

"I especially like teaching little kids the best. They're the most fun. I have



advanced students in their twenties and thirties; then I have intermediate students in high school; and then I have little kids in grade school and junior high. Maybe that's why I knew I'd like being a father. I have the patience for the little kids." And being a good father is important to Adams. Throughout the conversation, Adams mentions his four-year-old son, lan, and two-year-old daughter, Courtney. Several pictures of his family stand on the table in the hotel room, which is "home" for the night while he's on tour.

With his children in mind, Charlie Adams believes strongly in the school clinics that he does. And his sponsors were kind enough to support his idea of going out to the schools. Thanks to their continuous support, he was able to travel to many schools without charging them a fee. Ward Durrett summarizes Adams' clinics by saying, "Charlie presents an accessible mix of rudimental drumming with state-of-the-art technology."

"I told my sponsors that these kids are the people who are going to take up instruments in the future," Adams explains. "And of course the band directors and the principals were totally receptive. I wonder why more drummers don't do this across the whole country. I'm doing it in my area—about a three-hundred-mile radius from Nashville. Why can't some of the great drummers in L.A., Chicago, or New York go out and start doing some clinics in the schools? I want to see my kids have as good a chance as I did. So maybe we have to give something back. It can't all be for profit. The experience I get is a great 'profit'—it's very rewarding.

"I love doing the clinics and relating to the students. When I was growing up, I was always in a band, whether it was my own private rock band, a jazz band, or the symphony. Music was important to me, so I had no time to goof around. When I was out of school, every waking hour was spent playing in the rock band or being with the jazz band or whatever. My parents always knew where I was and what I was doing. I was real lucky; my mom and dad were very supportive. And today, I think that cutting arts programs from the schools is part of the reason we're seeing

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gang problems and crime right now. I think we're taking things away from the younger generation."

Adams' enthusiasm is contagious. "I think music breaks language barriers; it breaks religious barriers. You realize that people all basically feel the same about each other. I think musicians in general have always been more educated people," he theorizes, "because music creates a discipline. To learn to play an instrument well, you have to have intelligence, focus, and discipline. And when you have to sit there and practice to get better to make a career, you're going to be a little bit nicer person. My favorite people are musicians. Actually, most of my closest friends are drummers!"

While Charlie's love of drums, drummers, and drumming is obvious, he's quick to point out the importance of the business side of music. "I'd recommend all drummers get some business experience. You want to be a great musician, but at the same time you want to take care of business so you can make a living. Let's face it, I have a love for music, but at the same time I've got to pay bills like everybody else. I didn't want my drums to be a hobby; I wanted it to be a living. Drumming to me isn't a job, it's my career. If musicians in general, and drummers in particular, don't have the business end together, they're not going to last. I've seen a lot of great drummers who just didn't have the business head end up quitting, even though they had the talent.

"When I was in the band Chameleon, everybody in that band had a job. Yanni and Dugan [McNeill] were primarily working on the songwriting, and I was working on the business. I had to organize agents, get accountants, hire lawyers, have us incorporated, figure out how to get a certain amount of time off so we could record, find the money to record.... I got us corporate sponsorships and we eventually had a road crew; we ended up buying a semi and an RV. There were payments every month, and I had to deal with bankers. If we couldn't make it successful as a business, how could we make it successful musically?"

Yanni's success has its good and not-sogood points. "The best part about being on the road is the performance at night,"



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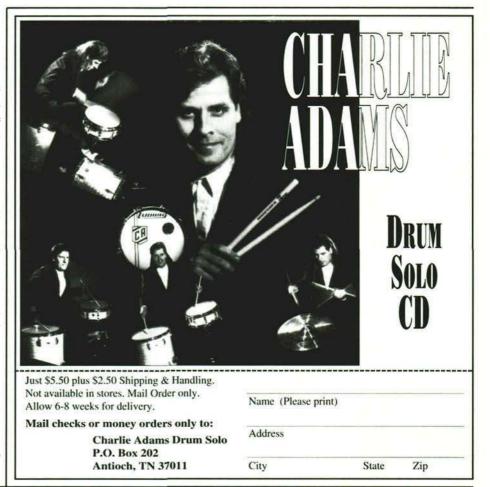
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Adams decides. "That's the payoff. The hard part is getting on the bus after the show, driving all night, and waking up at five o'clock in the morning to check into a hotel. Then they wake you up about three hours later, you get back on the bus, go to sound check and a rehearsal, and then you go to catering to have a little dinner. Then it's time to do the performance—and that's fin And then you get back on the bus again." Adams grins at the thought. "Sometimes we don't even know what city we're in—the hotels look the same. You don't really have time to be a tourist. On this tour right now, we're out for three months and we only have ten days off. We play almost every night.

"It's kind of funny," he continues. "People say, 'Well, now you've made it.' But the success was so gradual that you don't even notice it! Sometimes I think it was actually easier in the old days. You look back and get kind of nostalgic about the whole thing. 'Remember when we played that cool club and it was more intimate and we could talk to all the people?' Now it's grown to such proportions. But the best piece of advice my father ever told me was, 'Find out what you're good at, figure out a way to get paid for it, and you'll be much happier in your life. You don't want to work forty hours a week at something you don't like just to pick up a paycheck.' And he was right. Life's too short; it goes by too fast. I didn't want my life to be just a paycheck. I didn't want to have a job; I wanted to have a career."

Plans are already underway for a world tour with Yanni, starting in Latin America in November, and then going to southeast Asia, Australia, Japan, and Europe in 1995. "The advantage of our music," reflects Adams, "is that there are no lyrics. We have no language barrier at all. Why is

classical music and instrumental jazz so universal? Because it has no language barrier. I'm in a fortunate position right now. When you think about drums and drum solos, there's no language barrier."



"With cymbals, you can choose tradition or you can choose the best." - Charlie Adams



Charlie Adams Yanni

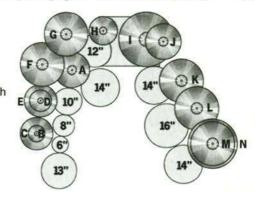
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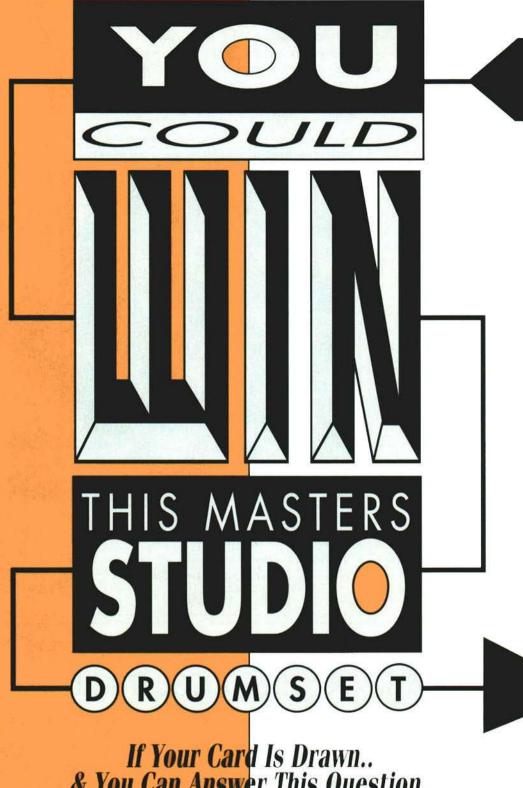
J 13" HH Thin Crash K 16" HH Thin Crash L 16" HH Thin Chinese

A 13" AA Rock Hats

M 16" HH Chinese N 18" AA Chinese



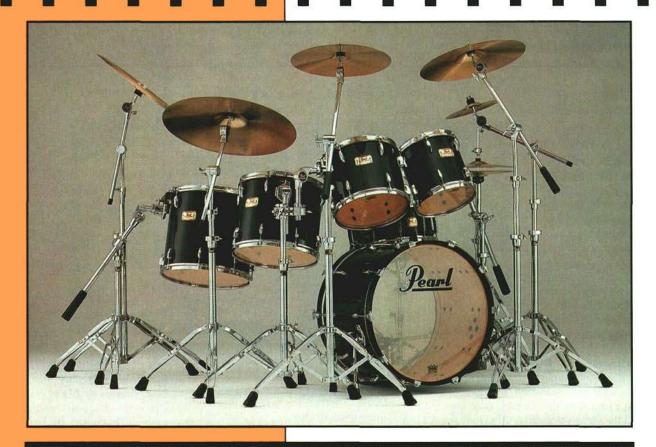




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Third Eye Open (Ryko/Black Arc 10304)

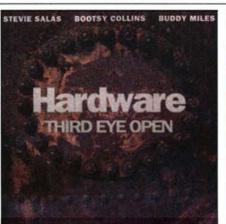


Buddy Miles: dr, vcl Stevie Salas: gtr, vcl Bootsy Collins: bs, vcl

Twenty years ago, before Living Colour and the Black Rock Coalition, there was Buddy Miles and his

visceral Hard Soul. Combining passionate singing and raw, propulsive drumming, Buddy played an important role in the '60s with Wilson Pickett, the Electric Flag, Jimi Hendrix (*Electric Ladyland* and the short-lived Band Of Gypsys), plus his own Buddy Miles Express in the '70s. His songwriting talents scored with "Them Changes" (a psychedelic bar band favorite of the time) and the anthemic "We Gotta Live Together."

Neither time nor a prison stint has diminished Buddy's powers. With Bootsy Collins' ubiquitous one-liners and Stevie Salas's Hendrix-ish guitar zapping Buddy





BUDDY MILES EXPRESS

Hell And Back (Ryko/Black Arc)

P P P 1/2

Buddy Miles: dr, vcl Jeff Levine: kybds Kevin Smith, Nicky Skopelitis: gtr Joe Thomas: bs

into the '90s, he whips Hardware through a set of time-warped soul/funk and spaced-out vamps. His soaring falsetto and loping groove (syncopated, swing-triplet fills abound) are the glue that hold this retro trio together.

Hell And Back may be an apt description of where he's been, but Buddy uses it all as inspiration on this diverse record, his first as a leader in nearly a decade. Buddy's new Express covers standards—"Born Under A Bad Sign," an incendiary "All Along The Watchtower," and the Everly Brothers' "Let It Be Me"—before sinking into the hot, deep-footed funk of

"The Decision," an instrumental reminiscent of Santana and Tower Of Power and full of the "jamming" ethic of the '70s. Buddy slams, an organ grinds, and the Uptown Horns boil the thick and greasy groove. "Nothing Left To Loose" closes the date with Miles wailing over a James Brown-ish 16th-note funk.

These records are lessons in both behind-the-beat fatback funk and hard R&B jamming, played by a hardy musician who was present at the music's explosive inception. Buddy Miles, with his wellspring of talent, is a survivor.

Ken Micallef

ART BLAKEY, CHARLI PERSIP, ELVIN JONES, PHILLY JOE JONES

Gretsch Drum Night At Birdland (Roulette/Blue Note 7243 8 28611 2 7)





Blakey, Persip, E. Jones, PJ. Jones: dr Sonny Red: al sx Charles Greenlea: tbn Tommy Flanagan: pno Ron Carter: bs

The night of April 25, 1960 was significant not just because Art Blakey, Charli Persip, Elvin Jones, and Philly Joe Jones were appearing together at Birdland, but

because the event was promoted as an opportunity for four prominent drummers to work together, not to engage in a "drum battle." Throughout the night the four players—who appeared in various duet and trio combinations, but never all four at once-took turns accompanying each other and setting up patterns together that evoked African and Cuban drum ensembles. While the drummers were obviously inspired by each other, there is little sense that any of them were trying to blow the others off the stage.

As one would expect, there are a lot of drum solos, but one also gets to hear the drummers play time behind the band, switching off behind different soloists so that one can easily compare accompaniment styles. In fact, a major disappointment of this reissue is that the producers were unable to

find original, unedited masters, and so much of the full band playing that was edited out for the original vinyl LP releases seems to be lost forever. But the album still provides a rewarding listening experience, and Kenny Washington's detailed liner notes are a valuable guide to knowing who is playing at any given time.

Rick Mattingly

KETIL BJORNSTAD

Water Stories (ECM 1503)





Ketil Bjernstad: pno Terje Rypdal: gtr Bj0rn Kjellemyr: bs Jon Christensen: dr (part 1) Per Hillestad: dr (part 2)

The power of water to carve through continents and embrace them in vast restless oceans has always inspired composers. Claude Debussy's La Mer perhaps best exemplifies this fascination (and certainly Debussy's ethereal sonic environment anticipates the expansive beauty that characterizes ECM recordings), but from the glistening fissure of Jon Christensen's cymbals opening "Glacial Reconstruction," through the soaring guitar echoes announcing mountainous climaxes, to the placid piano chords turning the final page of "History," this gorgeous album as easily recalls the introspection of La Cathedrale engloutie.

Norwegian Ketil Bj0rnstad

is an impressionistic pianist and composer (also a prolific writer) whose discovery of progressive jazz in the late '60s made him abandon an established classical career. Joining him, mentor Terje Rypdal, master colorist Christensen, and bassist Bj0rn Kiellemyr (builder of lovely vearning solos) is drummer Per Hillestad (from the pop group A-ha), whose endless rolling waves contrast Christensen's patient resonance. Freely improvised within trusting boundaries, these Water Stories traverse the inexorable time and space that swirl about our grateful islands.

Hal Howland

listeners might want to reach through the stereo and tighten the reins if they could. But in context, drummer Sean Kirkpatrick nails the picture on the wall with an approach that's unconventional, bare-bones, sparse, raw, and reserved.

For the most part, the drums sound as though they were recorded from behind a closet door. At first, it catches you off guard. But after a while, you not only accept the sound, it becomes rather intoxicating. The drumming, as with the rest of this odd record, quietly rocks with the assured innocence of musicians who've probably been spinning their music this way for years.

Matt Peiken

SWELL

41 (American 9362-45530-2)





Monte Vallier: bs David Freel: gtr, vcl Sean Kirkpatrick: dr

Turn back the clock and your metabolism for the rolling, relaxed, retro sound that made the '60s such a hap pening decade! K-Tel comme cial aside, Swell's 41 is an undeniable throwback to the compositional, vocal, and instrumental tones of yestervear.

The playing is so laid back and loose at times that some

NANDO LAURIA

Points Of View (Narada Equinox ND-63026)





Nando Lauria: gtr, vcl Lyle Mays, Jamshied Sharifi, Miguel Pessoa, Brad Hatfield: kybd Matt Garrison, Edson Lobo, Mike Rivard: bs Danny Gottlieb, Vanderlei Pereira, Russ Gold: dr, perc Cafe da Silva: perc Cidinho Teixeira: acdn Anders Bostrom: fl

Brazilian guitarist/vocalist Nando Lauria teams up with some top-notch players including fellow Pat Metheny alumni Lyle Mays and Danny Gottlieb for his first solo album. Solos are short and few; the emphasis here is on Lauria's satiny vocals, most of which deliver wordless melodies inspired by his native Recife and the northeastern region of Brazil. All the tunes are his own except for Lennon & McCartney's "If I Fell," which he and Mays arranged as a pensive ballad that jumps in and out of an uptempo samba.

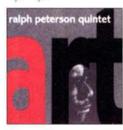
Gottlieb's breezy, upperbody-dominant style provides ideal momentum for the lighter tunes, and Lauria's highly structured arrangements flow from one feel or time signature into another. But the greater fascination to drummers will be Points Of View's attention to several lesser-known traditional Brazilian rhythms. Pereira's and Gold's drumkit interpretations of the zydecolike baiao, the martial ciranda and more syncopated maracatu, and the driving, straightahead xote, offer glimpses of the richness of the music of Brazil beyond the bossa, and demonstrate some great rhythmic ideas on which to build.

Richard Watson

RALPH PETERSON OUINTET

Art (Blue Note CDP 7243 8 27645 2 6)





Graham Haynes: cor Steve Wilson: sp, al sx Michele Rosewoman: pno Phil Bowler: bs Ralph Peterson: dr

An actual tribute album to Art Blakey seems hardly necessary in an age when half the world's young jazz bands sound like summer-camp versions of Blakey's Jazz Messengers. It becomes less so, and deepens the pain of Blakey's loss, when the heartfelt performance is as weak as it is here.

The ambitious but chaotic playing Ralph Peterson introduced as a member of Blue Note's repertory group Out Of The Blue (known at the time as the Jazz Monkees) is much in evidence: Rarely do his fills and his band come out in the same place. Only wistfully does Peterson occasionally recall a Buhaina trademark (the great fortepiano-crescendo effect, the joyously swinging bossa groove, the bluesy shuffle); and it is to his credit that he does not attempt to reproduce Blakey's majestic sound.

Peterson deserves praise for his warm, evocative compositions and novel arrangements (which would shine in the hands of, say, Marvin "Smitty" Smith). And he has surrounded himself with capable soloists. Mostly, though, he has succeeded in reminding us just how precious our Art Blakey records are.

Hal Howland

Critique continues on next page

SIGNIFICANT OTHERS

FRANKLIN KIERMYER's boisterous, aggressive, Elvin-inspired sound sparks his trio's Evidence release, *Solomon's Daughter*. ADAM NUSSBAUM kicks the John Abercrombie Trio all over town on *Speak Of The Devil*, the immaculate ECM follow-up to *While We're Young*. TODD TURKISHER stylishly covers David Byrne's varied world/rock influences on the ex-Head's new self-titled album (Luaka Bop/Warners). MICHAEL FIONDELLA's *Fundamentals Of Drumming (Emphasizing Rudiments)* video may not boast state-of-the-art production values, but its thorough coverage of rudiments and drum notation make it a helpful aid to novices taking those first important steps. (P.O. Box 103, Bethany, CT 06524-3226, [203] 393-0807)

RATING SCALE

ROY HARGROVE OUINTET

With The Tenors Of Our Time (Verve 314 523 019-2)







Roy Hargrove: trp, flghn Gregory Hutchinson: dr Ron Blake: tn, sp sx Cyrus Chestnut: pno Rodney Whitaker: bs Johnny Griffin, Joe Henderson, Branford Marsalis, Joshua Redman, Stanley Turrentine: tn sx

When all the "young lions of jazz" hype about "who has the hottest technique at the earliest age" has died away, trumpeter Roy Hargrove will still be standing tall. Okay, he had chops at seventeen and is now only twenty-four. But forget about all that because, as this stunning disc shows, he's really about a beautiful sound, personality, and expression. And when it comes to ballads, he stands alongside Thad Jones with his gorgeous flugelhorn voice.

Gregory Hutchinson has become a much sought-after straight-ahead drummer, especially since his high-profile performance on Joe Henderson's Grammy-winning Lush Life. In addition to his inspirational rhythmic energy, we find here further reason for his status. With big-eared Hutchinson at the helm, the rhythm section elegantly adapts to the diverse styles of the five featured "tenors of our time." Under Hutchinson's hospitable roof, the sax soloists are truly red-carpet guests.

Jeff Potter

VIDEOS

THE ART OF SEOUENCING A STEP BY STEP APPROACH

by Don Muro (CPP Media Video)



\$39.95,1 hour

Active endeavors like drumming, carpentry, and sumo wrestling take full and natural

advantage of instructional videos' ability to demonstrate complex or subtle physical techniques more effectively than can words alone. More or less static ones, such as algebra and sequencing, are probably served as well by books—case in point, Don Muro's The Art Of Sequencing video and book of the same name.

More aptly named "The Mechanics Of Sequencing," Muro's video largely skirts issues that require qualitative musical discretion. Instead, in strict "how-to" book fashion, it demonstrates basic procedures for creating and editing sequences. A split screen simultaneously displays major steps in text as Muro reads them, or his finger pressing buttons on the sequencer control panel as he describes what he is doing. As the subtitle promises, the approach is step...by...step, and even similar procedures with mostly identical steps are repeated in their entirety. The upside of this thorough, excruciatingly methodical approach is superclarity, allowing even the technologically impaired no chance of missing any point.

The downside is numbing tedium which, with a modicum of variety in the material's presentation, might have been avoided. But adhering rigidly to the *TelePrompTed* script, Muro doesn't merely remind the viewer or paraphrase shared steps and concepts, he repeats them word for word. The result exemplifies the most common complaints about the very technology he is promoting, that it is lifeless and seemingly oblivious to its potential for redundancy.

The Art Of Sequencing video provides good basic information. But like a lot of bad sequencing, even when it gets the notes right, it's an awful bore to listen to.

Richard Watson

BOOKS

GARY CHAFFEE

Sticking Patterns (CPP Belwin, Inc.)







\$24.95 (Book and CD)

One of four books in Gary Chaffee's acclaimed "Patterns" series, Sticking Patterns is filled with studies dealing with accented single strokes, double strokes, and compound stickings. But the book is not just another Stick Control clone, as Chaffee goes beyond mere physical control to develop an awareness of how stickings can affect articulation and phrasing, and how they can be used on a full drumset for different time feels, fills, and solos. Chaffee demonstrates a generous portion of the exercises on the accompanying CD, and also presents applications of the exercises that aid one in understanding how to use them.

The exercises range from fairly simple ones involving 8th and 16th notes in duple and triple meters to some that contain groupings of fives and sevens as well as subdivided triplets and over-the-barline rhythms. Some require advanced understanding of rhythm and reading, but there are enough relatively simple exercises that intermediate players would have plenty to work on. And the sooner one begins to understand the concepts of stickings and phrasings, the easier it will be to incorporate them into one's playing.

So, is the material practical? Not if "practical" means a series of hot licks and grooves you can spend a few minutes learning and then use at your Holiday Inn gig tonight. But if the term refers to something that gets results and will help you achieve technique and musicality, then this book delivers practicality in spades.

Rick Mattingly

THE ESSENCE OF BRAZILIAN PERCUSSION AND DRUM SET

by Ed Uribe (CPP/Belwin Inc.)



\$21.95 with cassette \$24.95 with CD

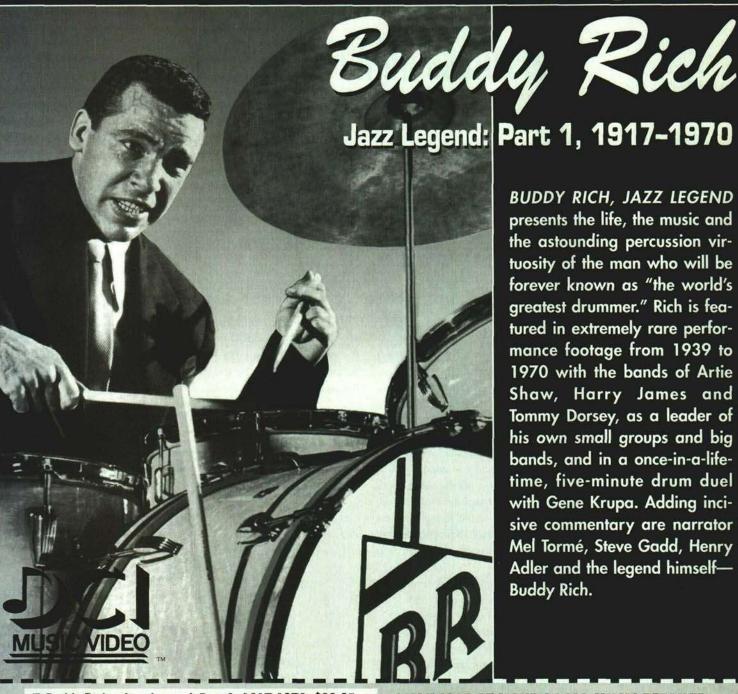
Rather than heaping on endless exercises. Ed Uribe is more concerned here with communicating the feel and style interconnecting the family of folkloric Brazilian rhythms. A Berklee faculty member who has performed with the likes of Ray Baretto, Tania Maria, and Gary Burton, Uribe admirably achieves his goal by halving this generous 144-page volume into percussion and drumset sections. Before diving into the kit grooves, drummers are urged to study the percussion section, which describes traditional Brazilian instruments, and their basic techniques, rhythms, and ensemble applications. "To capture the essence of these styles in your set playing," Uribe writes, "you must draw from what the percussion plays."

The drumset section covers bossa nova in four, five, six, and seven meters, baiao, maracatu, marcha, frevo, catarete, and afoxe. Naturally, much time is spent with samba styles including samba in three, four, and seven meters, batucada, samba cruzado, samba marcha, and samba de partido alto. Also included are a helpful demonstration CD, rhythm section score examples, historical background, and suggested listening lists. It's a grand undertaking smartly handled. To his great credit, Uribe somehow manages to cover vast territory without slighting authenticity.

Jeff Potter



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Variations On A Five-Piece Kit

by Steve Snodgrass

While leafing through some music magazines recently it occurred to me how incredibly personalized the drumset has become over the past few decades. For many years after the "trap set" first appeared, the instrument evolved continuously—but most drummers seemed to play very similar setups at any given time. These days, however, you're not likely to find many well-known drummers with much similarity in the number, size, and placement of their drums, cymbals, and accessories. In fact, the instrument itself has evolved away from standardization. A piano has eighty-eight chromatically arranged keys, and a guitar has six strings with a standard fretboard. But a drumset has...well...whatever you want it to have, arranged however you want!

While drum companies have followed the trend and moved more toward the component, "you-design-it" approach in marketing their sets recently, there is still a standard configuration that you'll find in nearly every brand's catalog. It is, of course, the familiar five-piece kit consisting of bass drum, snare, two bassmounted toms, floor tom, hi-hat, one ride, and one crash cymbal. I started out about twenty years ago with this setup, and it's still the most common, so I think it's a safe bet that a lot of you out there have it, too. If you do, I want to share some simple (but not necessarily obvious) ideas to help you personalize your kit for your music and playing style, and also to help you make the most of a limited number of components.

I have four different physical variations of my trusty five-piece, which I use in different musical situations. The only additional piece of gear I use is one extra (inexpensive) snare stand.

The first variation is one you probably already use, which I'll call the "Standard" setup (Figure 1). This is a good arrangement for general drumset playing; all of the elements are close together, and—assuming the height and angle adjustments are sensible—you have an easy path of motion around the snare and toms. There is, however, one disadvantage to this setup. The ride cymbal ends up fairly far away from you—high and to the right in order not to hit or block the middle tom. It's not necessarily a problem, but if you spend much time on that cymbal, your right arm muscles may start to complain. I'll never forget a clinic I attended in which Bernard Purdie observed that the longer most drummers play, the lower and closer all of their cymbals get!

In my desire to improve my ride-cymbal endurance and relaxation, I learned to use what I call the "Basic Four" setup (Figure 2). This configuration was the industry standard for many years, and is the predecessor of the five-piece kit. It's a simple tradeoff: You remove the middle tom in order to pull the ride cymbal in

closer and lower (where you can reach it with your arm more relaxed and your elbow at or near your side).

The ergonomic benefits of this can be amazing, but what about that tom? Well, there are several ways of looking at it. Yes, you've lost one voice from your instrument, but does the music you're playing require that voice? Your answer might well be yes, especially if the music is the kind of rock or pop where big tom fills abound. But consider some of the big-name players who have used this four-drum setup with great success in pop and rock: Ringo Starr, Jim Keltner, Max Weinberg, and Andy Newmark, to name a few.

There is something to be said for fewer drums (and cymbals). For one thing, it's easier to focus on good time and feel without a big set to tempt you away from the groove. A friend of mine in a popular Chicago club band uses no mounted toms at all for just this reason. The great Buddy Rich defended his lack of a larger

Figure 1

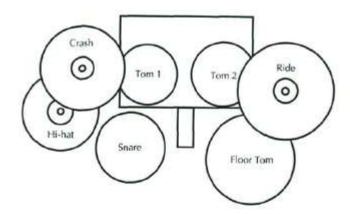
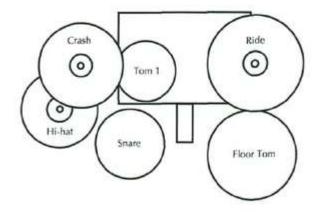


Figure 2



set by explaining that he had yet to master what he already had!

Speaking of Buddy, take a look at my third variation, or what I call the "Big Band" setup (Figure 3). For this one, take your middle tom and nest it in an extra snare stand so that the top rim is level with that of the floor tom. This placement gives you three tom voices without losing the nice, tight ride cymbal—which may explain why Buddy and many of his contemporaries favored it. For big band jazz, I use this setup and tune the middle tom down closer to the pitch of the floor tom in order to approximate the double-floor-tom sound common to 1940s-era music.

Now look at the last variation (Figure 4). It also requires an extra snare stand, but this time for the smallest tom. I call this the "Typewriter" setup because I push the mounted toms over to the

Figure 3

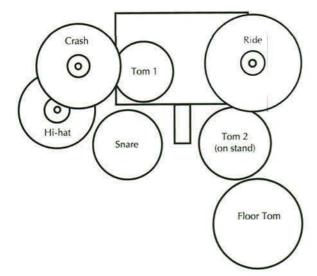
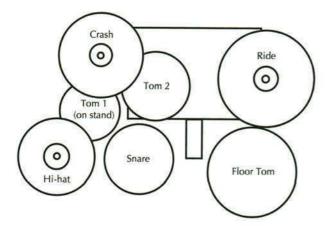
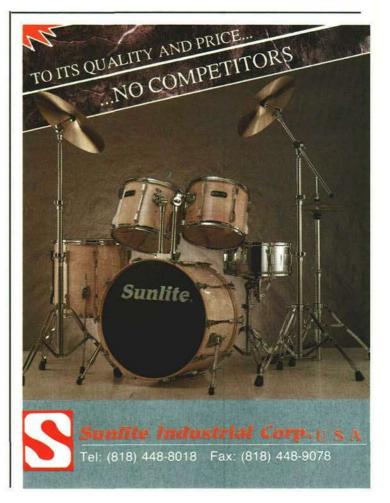


Figure 4



left (like an old typewriter carriage), one notch away from their spots in the Standard arrangement. I use this positioning more than any of the others now, for several reasons. The ride cymbal is in tight, the toms are all within easy reach (without reaching back and to the right), and the crash cymbal can go between the first and second toms, where it's equally easy to reach with either hand—something none of the other setups provide. The Typewriter arrangement does shift your "center line" off to the left a bit and may require greater spread of your footboards than you're used to. But it also accommodates a double bass pedal well, and allows for convenient music-stand positioning over the hi-hat and first tom. For me, the Typewriter variation is simply the most versatile and easy to play.

If you have a five-piece kit, I hope you'll experiment with these different options. They can help you take a fresh look at your approach to playing the drumset, and also give you some valuable insights into designing your own "perfect" setup when the time to expand or replace your kit comes along.



Send quick, proven tips that have saved you time, money, or effort to Drumline, c/o Modern Drummer, 870 Pompton Avenue, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. Items can range from equipment maintenance, repair, or design tips to practice and playing ideas. Please keep tips to 150 words or less, and be sure to include your name and address. We will pay \$15 for every tip we publish.

LOG TOTE FOR STANDS

I've had a problem over the years with fitting newer, stronger, and larger stands into my old trap case. I recently found a lowcost alternative to bundling them in carpets or just carrying them loose. I ordered a Log-Tote, which is a canvas bag designed to haul firewood. It has leather handles and is 14" long—which nicely accommodates any section of my stands. The sides come up about 6" to contain it all neatly. I ordered mine through a mailorder catalog (Improvements, Cleveland, Ohio) but I'm sure most good fireplace shops would have them too. It cost me only \$19.95 plus shipping and works fantastically!

GregPalaski South River, NJ

ADDING A TAMBOURINE

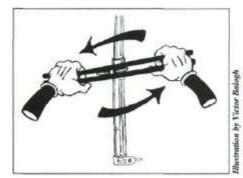
Here's a little playing idea for drummers who use a tambourine. I set up pretty wide, so there's enough space between my hi-hat and snare drum to put my tambourine there-mounted on the bottom two-thirds of a cymbal stand. It's low enough not to be in the way of the hi-hat, yet high enough to be played as an alternative to the hi-hat. I can also combine the two to create some interesting—and very danceable—patterns. Additionally, I turned the stand's tripod base so that one of the legs is facing me. I can step on that leg like a pedal to make the tambourine sound—giving me the opportunity to add another sound using a limb that's sometimes doing nothing.

> Rik Pfau Freeport, MN

LOOSENING TIGHT WINGNUTS

Everybody knows how much of a drag it is to loosen wingnuts that somehow got tightened too much. You can jam or scrape your fingers trying to loosen them by hand, and you can permanently gouge or mar the nuts if you try to loosen them with pliers or a wrench. Here's something I've discovered that works well: Take a pair of drumsticks and put one on either side of the wingnut. Then, like using a tire iron or crowbar, grab each end of both sticks and twist. (See illustration.) This gives you added leverage and strength without jeopardizing either your fingers or the wingnut.

Danny Frankel Los Angeles, CA



RIDING THE MARAGA

I was recently walking through the subway in New York City, and I heard a flutist and a maraca player jamming on a Latin jazz standard. It sounded beautiful to me, and I thought to myself, "I can do that and play drums at the same time." I went home, took one maraca in my right hand, sat down at the set, and started to play. I found that I wasn't comfortable holding and playing the maraca in the air (in the "traditional" manner). But I discovered that by tapping the maraca on my right leg and playing 8th notes I was able to get a groove and also incorporate the use of the rest of my body. I now use this technique whenever I need to play bossa novas or cha-chas.

> Andy Weintraub Brooklyn, NY

MUFFLING PADS

I needed muffling pads for my drums that would eliminate as much sound as possible when I practiced. Commercially made pads for my seven-piece set, with two cymbals and the hi-hat, came to around \$100, and the sound reduction was inadequate for my needs. Instead, I purchased a 6'x6' piece of 1/2 "-thick Rebond carpetbacking pad. Out of this I cut two each of custom-fitted pads for a snare, five toms, a 24" bass drum, a hi-hat (one pad on top and one between the cymbals), and one each for a 22" and an 18" cymbal. My total cost came to \$12. Not only is the sound reduction greater than the commercial pads I tried, but the playing response is also better.

Get the highest-density 1/2"-thick *Rebond* material you can find. It comes in 6' widths, is sold by the linear foot, has a white backing for tracing out patterns to size, and is easily cut with scissors.

Jim Fleck Eugene, OR

HOME-MADE DRY HEADS

I enjoy the sound that an Evans Genera Dry batter head gives my snare drum. I wanted the same sound for my toms, but Evans doesn't offer Dry heads for those drums. So I studied the design of the snare batter and went about making my own tom-tom batters. I started with Remo Ebony Pinstripes. I removed the center portion of the top ply of each head, leaving the epoxy-glued circular area intact. Then, with a hammer and an ice pick I punched twelve holes each in the 12" and 13" toms and sixteen holes in the 16" tom. I placed the holes in locations corresponding to those on the snare head. On my clear Pinstripe bass drum batter I left the entire head intact and just punched the holes. I also added an impact pad. I got the sound I was searching for from all of my heads!

> Val Iengo Port Richey, FL

BANDING YOUR BELL

Looking for an interesting and inexpensive way to muffle a cowbell? Try using a few elastic bands wrapped around different areas of the bell. The flat variety approximately 5mm wide work best. Take some time to get them on the bell so that they lie flat and right up against each other. Experiment with the number and location of the bands until you reach a desired tone. You'll be surprised at the amount of control you have over the sound. Fitting an 8" cowbell with four to six bands at the closed end and two to three near the center creates two separate playing areas with distinct tones, allowing you to get more out of a single bell. Putting a couple of bands right at the mouth of the bell and securing them with a small piece of tape gives a Ridge Rider-type effect and minimizes wear and tear.

This method is definitely cleaner and more versatile than duct tape. Besides, the colors available can give the old black beauty a really festive, "custom" appearance

> Richard Ostafin Toronto, Ontario, Canada

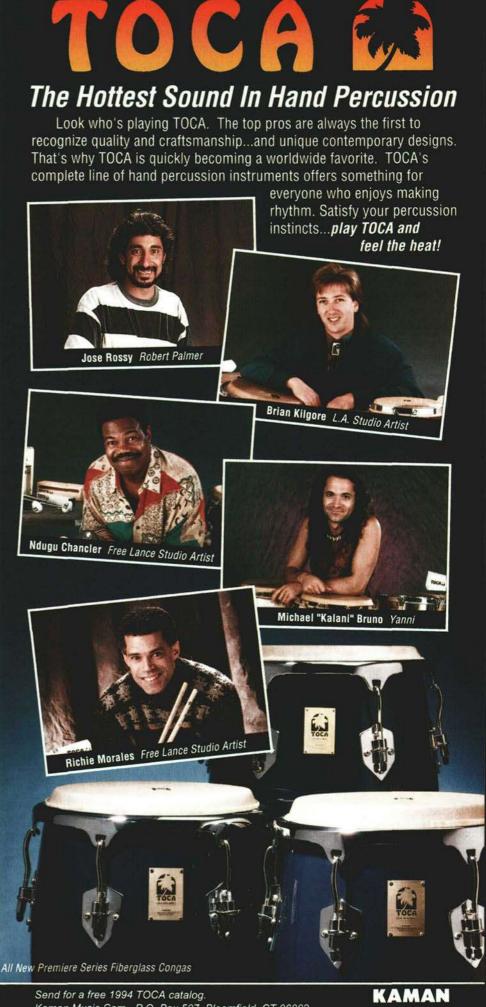
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continued from page 31

uses rudiments?" I said, "Well, these rock drummers are coming up with some hip stuff, Shelly. My son showed me a thing with paradiddles that's pretty hip." He politely said, "Aw, get lost."

Then Mancini said, "Shelly, I want you to get this locomotive thing these drummers are getting into on the hi-hat." Shelly tried and was scuffling with it, trying to play 16th notes with one hand. Henry was saying, "No, no, that's not it." I went over to Shelly and said, "Look, my son showed me this beat with paradiddles and inverted paradiddles. You won't have to work half as hard as you're working." I wrote down the paradiddle hi-hat pattern where the left hand comes back on the backbeat on 2 and 4. It was right, left, right, right. Left, right, right, left, so you would hear the backbeat on 2 and you'd ghost the last left hand. Shelly started messing with it and he picked it up right away.

The next time we did that cue, Shelly played that pattern and Henry said, "That's it, Shelly. *That's* what I wanted." I don't

think he put down rudiments after that, and from then on, I became his best friend. In fact, he wrote the introduction to my drum book.

RF: Were you primarily playing percussion on these dates?

JP: I played a lot of drums, too. At Universal, after Shelly, I was probably one of the number-one drumset players. It was an interesting time.

There was a little era where Jeff met David Hungate and David Paich, and they got hot around town as a rhythm section. They called them the Youngbloods. Jeff had been playing at the Studio City Park with the band he had in high school, Rural Still Life, and Jules Chaiken, this wellknown contractor in town, happened to be there. He heard the band and freaked over the drummer. He went over to Jeff and asked him his name. The very next week, Chaiken came over and said, "I heard your son play last week. He knocked me out. He's a hell of a little drummer." Before I knew it, the contractors were calling for Jeff.

RF: Did you get to work together?

JP: When Marty Paich took over Ironside

at Universal, it required a real funky rhythm section, so they hired Jeff, Paich, and Hungate to be part of the rhythm section. There's Jeffrey, seventeen years old, playing at Universal with all these heavyweight studio guys.

I remember one day Jeff was in the drum booth and I was playing congas on a session for a TV movie. He looked over at me and shook his head—in other words saying, "Dad, this isn't for me." He was very bored on those dates. After that he wouldn't take that kind of studio call. He only enjoyed record dates. Contractors would see me on the date and say, "Why isn't your son taking my dates?" I said, "Hey, he's his own person now." He had an incredible opportunity to become the number-one studio drummer if he wanted to. He didn't want it.

RF: That's an interesting point of discussion—creativity in the studio. Do you feel stimulated?

JP: That's a hard question because there are so many different types of dates. Some of the music wasn't demanding. It had no groove to it. Here's a seventeen-year-old kid rolling on a cymbal, hitting a triangle.



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For me, it was always a challenge coming up with the right conga beat. With the percussion thing they'd go, "We want some kind of a sound here. The triangle isn't right. What else can we do there? I need a weird sound." It was kind of challenging to put a cymbal on a timp and hit the cymbal and push the pedal down. Emil Richards has all these instruments you can rent, but when you're on a date and they need you to come up with a weird sound on the spur of the moment, you have to get your imagination going.

RF: Can you recall some of the more creative sessions?

JP: Any time I've ever worked with Lalo Schifrin. I played some drums for him on Mission Impossible. That was always a challenge because there was a lot of playing in five, and I had to come up with a beat he would be happy with.

RF: Things weren't always necessarily written out?

JP: Oh, no. I'm pretty famous for playing what's not there. [laughs] And I don't mean it quite like that. You have to be careful. There was an era when I was playing a lot of drums, and that was because I would come up with things they were pretty happy with.

If they wrote in odd times, my experience helped them along. Because of my odd-time experience in drums, if I play congas or any hand percussion, I just transfer my thinking over to that. If I'm playing drums in five and I think of some permutations to embellish what I'm playing, I use those same concepts playing hand percussion. If I'm playing congas in five and I see a pattern, what they write is usually pretty bland, so I'll see how far I can go with my own concept. Sometimes I might go too far and they'll say, "Hey, that's too busy." You have to be careful. Sometimes it works and you're a hero, and sometimes it's too busy. There were times when I worked for Dave Grusin and I had to record a tambourine part in seven. Some guys have trouble just playing in seven. On this particular movie I played mostly percussion and timps, but he needed to overdub some rhythm. It was a cue in seven, and I felt good about the fact that

he was happy with what I came up with. I did all his movies after that.

It is also creative when you get on a movie call, and something the composer wrote doesn't work out. The producer will say to the composer, "What the hell were you thinking of? This isn't happening for this scene." So the composer comes out and he's either going to rewrite it or say, "Guys, help me." He's not ashamed to admit it: "I've got to do something here; what can you come up with?" So you need to ad-lib. And with the tabla stuff, for instance, they'll just give you what they call a sketch, a skeleton. Some guys will literally write the part out.

RF: Let's take it from the beginning. You get a call, and....

JP: A contractor gets together with the composer and they figure out the budget and what it calls for. How big an orchestra? How many percussionists? Let's say there are five, which is about average. Sometimes it's less, but it's been pretty big lately. Let's say he or she wants Emil Richards, Bob Zimmitti—who's a great snare drummer, he and I think the same way-Larry Bunker, myself, and maybe

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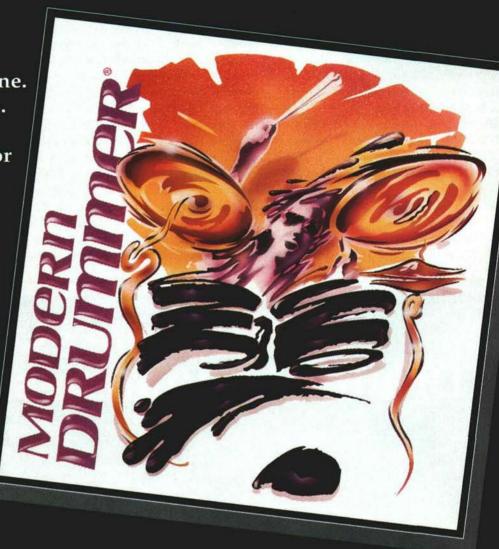


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Mike Fisher on electronics. The timpanist is classified by himself because of the way they're writing for timpani lately. He has so much to think about, so much timing and work, that they leave him alone as far as percussion. Believe me, he's worth every dime he gets. The timpanist usually gets time and a half, sometimes double, because it's such a demanding chair.

Things are not disorganized, somebody has to be the straw boss in the percussion section—"You play this, you play that, you play that." Let's say it's Emil Richards. He'll look at the music and say, "Joe, you play snare drum. Bob, you play congas. Larry, you play vibes. Mike, you're on electronics." And it goes very smoothly. Whoever is asked to be the straw boss gets time and a half, too.

RF: So you get the call and it tells you where to be and when.

JP: The call might be, "MGM, Monday morning, the 24th, 10:00 A.M., double session," which is 10:00 A.M. until 6:00 P.M. The call may say, "Joe, you are to bring the instruments"—which means I'm the straw boss—and "Call the copyist." I'll call the Fox Library and say, "This is Joe

Porcaro. I need to know what we need for percussion on James Newton Howard's date on Monday the 24th for *Wyatt Earp,"* and they'll give me a list of all the instruments we need.

On the actual date, I get there an hour ahead of time and get all the instruments out. The guys all get there, the music is passed out, and I open the book and say, "Okay, on this cue, Bob, you play snare drum. Bunk, I want you to play bass drum." On another call, Larry Bunker will be on timps.

We just did the next *Karate Kid* movie for Bill Conti. Emil Richards is always first percussionist for him. Usually Larry is on timps, and Bill likes the way I play tabla and snare drum. For that one, it said tabla. On *Huckleberry Finn* I did snare drum, which was all this intricate, real quiet snare drum playing with the trumpets. Certain composers want you for certain things.

RF: How much time do you have to look at your part?

JP: We arrive at the studio, they pass out the music, I uncover the timps and let the heads get settled into the room tempera-

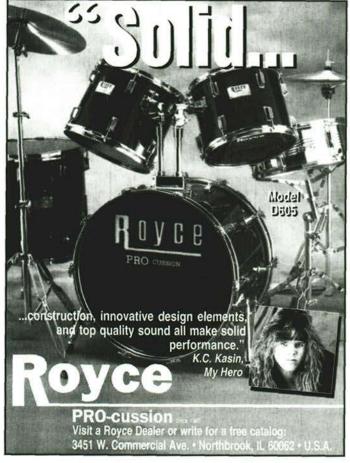
ture. I open up the music and start marking how many notes I need to tune and where I have changes. I look at the music and the conductor runs it down so the engineer can get a balance. We run it down maybe two or three times, and then we start recording.

Movies are a little more relaxed than a television serial. That's where it can really get hairy. I used to do shows like *I Dream Of Jeannie*, where within three hours you had to record two, sometimes three shows. They came in with pounds of music, but they're short cues. We'd run it down once and start recording, run down the next cue and record, run down the next cue and record. I remember doing some of those 7 *Dream Of Jeannie* shows where I had to play pretty difficult xylophone parts.

RF: Have you ever been unable to do your part?

JP: So far, thank God, I've never been hung for playing a mallet part. But if I did, I'd just say, "If this was such a difficult part, you called the wrong guy." I don't advertise that I'm a hot mallet player. I can play mallets and I can play some pretty difficult parts, but hopefully I'm not going to get nailed. I do the best I can. But I





don't panic like I used to. When I first started doing this I thought, "When am I going to get nailed?" But I never did. Actually, today it's a little easier because if I blow a part, I can overdub. There wasn't as much overdubbing years ago. But I've been on some calls where I had to play some xylophone parts and said to myself, "This is it. You're either going to play this or you're out of here." And I did

I would put the part in my case, go home, and try to play that part, but at home I couldn't do it. Something happens to you when you're in the studio with your subconscious—your adrenaline—and you say, "I've got to do this." And you do it. I don't know how I played some of the parts I've had to play.

RF: Do you remember a session where sweat formed on your brow?

JP: Quite a few. [laughs] There were a couple of sessions where I had to play some pretty tough mallet parts, for instance, for the movie Mame. It wasn't so

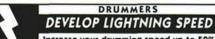
much whether it was a xylophone part or a snare drum part that was difficult. What was hairy about it was the music in general was so difficult, with all kinds of changing meters. When we did *The Outlaw* Josey Wales and The Wild Bunch with Jerry Fielding, there were so many changing meters. I played timps on The Fugitive, a more current movie, and that was a pretty tough part, again with changing meters all over the place.

When I used to do albums with Toto, originally I would go in there and play tambourine, vibes, a little conga...but all of a sudden, the musicians in the rock bands became very sophisticated. People like Lenny Castro, who is a specialist in certain areas, began to come in. If they want a vibe player, they go out and get Larry Bunker or Emil Richards.

I think one of the most pressured moments I ever had was overdubbing for Jeff and David Paich. Guys like that and James Newton Howard are so finicky about the time. If you play on top, they

notice it in two seconds. I might think I was right with the click, but they could say I'd have to still hold back. Before Jeff passed away, I overdubbed on "Jake To The Bone." That tune was in seven, and Jeff wanted me to play muffled bell plates. These are steel plates, and I played them with triangle beaters. Then I had to play tabla on a ballad. Everybody would leave the room and it would be just Jeff and me in the studio until things got pretty tight. Then Paich would walk in, which made it more intense. Those were some pretty scary moments.

On the album before that, The Seventh One, we did "Mushanga." It was rare that they used me on congas, but Jeff wanted me to play congas and squeeze drum on that track. It was a pretty hip rhythm, like an African type of thing. It was just Jeff and me. He wanted to see what it sounded like with congas, so I started playing and he said, "Hey, that's pretty decent, let's keep it. I want you to do it." "You sure you don't want to wait for Lenny?" "No,



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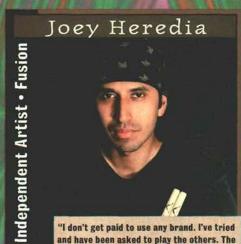
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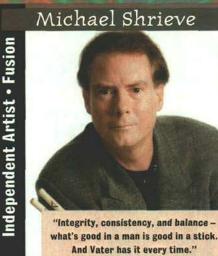
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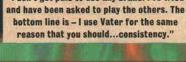
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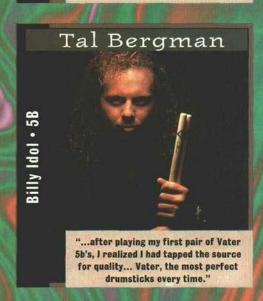
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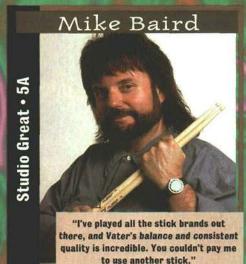
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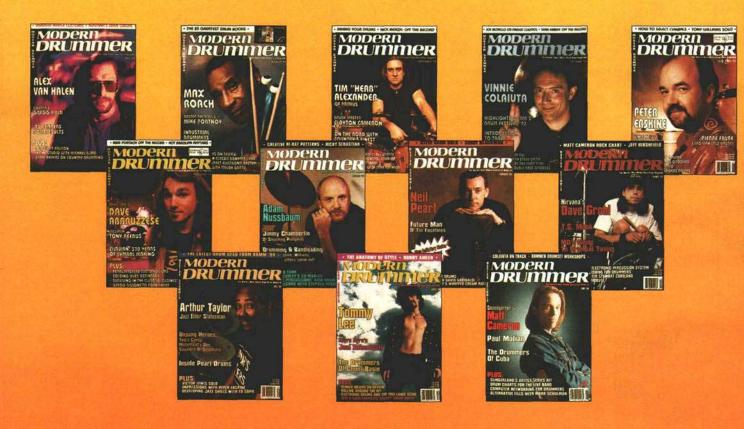
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no, you do it."

Then there was the night I was doing Blood In And Blood Out with Bill Conti when Jeff passed away. I was playing tabla when the stage hand came over and tapped me on the shoulder and said I needed to call my daughter immediately. I knew something was seriously wrong because he wouldn't have come over right in the middle of a take. I thought something had happened to my wife—why would my daughter be calling? I went to the phone and came back and explained they had just rushed Jeff to the hospital. The contractor said, "We need one more take on that." We were so close and it was just a forty-second cue. It was difficult in the respect that I was playing tabla and I had to play with a click track. There wasn't anything to read except bar lines; I was ad-libbing what he asked for-a hip rhythmic part. So I did one more take and jumped in the car. That was crazy. To be honest with you, I was probably in shock. I didn't even know what I was doing.

RF: What do you consider your forte?

JP. I'm not as good in some areas as I am

in others. For instance, I'm not as good on mallets as I am on drumset or snare drum. But I feel pretty good about everything. I try to stay on top of it all. I try to play a little bit of tabla every day, just to move my fingers.

I have a ball playing tabla. Don Ellis and Emil Richards turned me on to what we call permutations. I apply that. Let's say Bill Conti writes a tabla part. We're in 4/4 and the click is going. It's just slashes. There are no rhythms written out, nothing. It just says, "Play time," and they leave it up to your imagination. On The Next Karate Kid Bill said, "There's a rhythm section on the track. We're going to overdub you with the orchestra to the rhythm track." It was a groove kind of thing. I listened to the bass, and he played a hip line, so I just based my permutations around his line. Then Bill said, "At the end of the phrases, I want you to do some turnarounds that lead us back nicely to the beginning of the phrase again." So I got into some tihais and some different permutations.

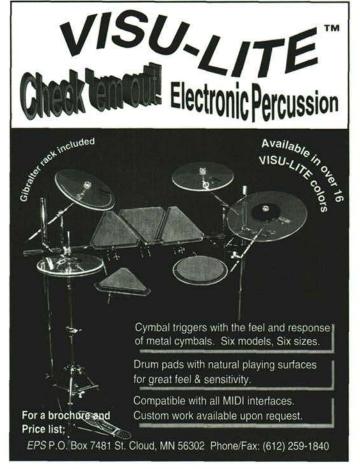
RF: Can you explain permutations?

JP: Permutations are groupings. If I'm playing in seven, I'm going to permutate it 3-2-2 or 2-2-3 or 2-3-2. That's a regular seven. I can play a long seven, so I can permutate over two bars, or fourteen 8th notes. That gives me more possibilities like a 2 and four 3s, or four 3s and a 2, or two 3s, a 2, and then two more 3s. You can move the 2 all over the place.

RF: Can you explain what a tihai is?

JP: A tihai is a rhythm concept that the classical Indian drummers get into. The definition of a tihai is a rhythmical phrase, for instance, three quarter notes repeated three times. Say you take the three quarter notes and repeat them three times. The last note, which is the ninth note, is the downbeat of the new phrase. You have three groups of three quarter notes, and if you take those nine notes and put them in 4/4 time, the ninth note is the beginning of a new phrase in 4/4 time. Drummers use this as a way of developing cymbal turnarounds and rhythm turn-arounds at the end of a phrase. It takes two bars plus a downbeat to do that, so if you're playing the blues, this would come in the eleventh





and twelfth bar. The one extra note would be the beginning of the new chorus all over again. It's what the classical Indian drummers get into, but jazz drummers have been doing it for ages. They just did it naturally. I like to use it in my teaching.

RF: In your first *Modern Drummer* article in 1978, you were just talking about PIT as a concept. What, today, do you feel is good about the curriculum at PIT?

JP: Our school has the reputation for being a rock 'n' roll drum school, and it *is* an incredible school for rock drummers. But I feel it's a great all-around school. We thought about it and realized that for any drum school to be successful, there has to be a nuts and bolts curriculum. I learned that from the Hartt School. They weren't the greatest jazz school in the world, but you would learn *music* there because the curriculum was nuts and bolts—the basics. That was the premise we went on.

We made sure our reading curriculum was tops and that our technique curriculum, which I kind of wrote, was strong. We brought Steve Houghton in and he helped us with our big band ensemble cur-

riculum. Joey Baron was out here and we brought him in to do the jazz curriculum. Efrain Toro was new on the scene, and he handled the Latin thing. With those guys and my co-director, Ralph Humphrey, I knew we had it made. We've stayed on top of things through the years.

Most drummers who are talented just sit down and play the drums. I was playing the drums when I still hadn't taken a lesson in my life. But that doesn't mean you're going to be a drummer. Your natural talent is only going to take you so far. If you don't have any knowledge, you're gone. All this technique is not just for soloing, it's for anything, like keeping time.

RF: How do you feel about teaching at PIT?

JP: PIT is a very demanding school to teach at every day. I come home from the studios, I have dinner, and I go into my studio to get PIT's lesson ready for the next day. What are you going to do in front of thirty kids? Shuck it? They know what's going on. We get some high-level students.

RF: That must take a lot of dedication.

You obviously don't need to do it.

JP: I enjoy it. I get upset if students fluff off, though. I've walked out of my classroom a few times. Nobody's prepared, they're not paying attention, and I say, "Thank you, see you next week," and walk out. Generally, I have to say that the kids are great, although when we first started we got some real dooseys. We have students coming over from Japan who are really dedicated, kids from Europe and from other states. I'd say 90% of the kids who come to PIT come to learn. I see some great things happen. Some kids come in and can hardly play and when they leave, it's incredible.

RF: With your busy teaching and performing schedule, I'm surprized you decided to start your other businesses.

JP: I started my own diamond-tip drumstick company called *Diamond Tips*. It's a different-shaped tip. Right now they're nylon tip, but down the road we're hoping to make them out of wood, too.

I was recording a movie called *Glory* at MGM with James Horner that had a lot of intricate snare drum stuff. I had been working with a machinist on this diamond-



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shaped tip. I put the sticks together and used them, and they articulated incredibly well. They're great for cymbal work and hi-hat stuff.

On the last studio album Jeff did with Toto, he had me bring some sticks by. Jeff used the diamond tips on Luke's ballad. The rest of the band was out to lunch when I brought the sticks by. Jeff used them on the next take after that, and the engineer loved it, though he thought Jeff had changed the hi-hats and cymbals. Jeff said, "No, same hi-hats and cymbals. I'm just using different sticks." But they're not for heavy, bashing rock 'n' roll, unless you use heavy-duty, two-ply heads.

I also started a cover business with Fred Beato. We make vibe, timpani, and conga covers, as well as cymbal and stick bags.

RF: What else would fulfill you?

JP: Right now I'm having a ball. I'm playing bebop with Emil Richards. Once a month we play Chadney's, a jazz club in Burbank. I look forward to that all month long. That's it for me right now, to play bebop drums. That's my love.

RF: When you broke into the studios, it was a different animal. How can anyone hope to do it today?

JP: I don't think anything is very different today. But my advice is that you really have to be great at what you do. Back then, the percussionist was known to play all the areas of percussion—you played mallets, timps, congas, hand percussion and sometimes drums. I did a lot of shows where I played drums, timps, mallets, and overdubbed conga drums. Today, the producers are so hip that if they need a conga drum, they go out and get a specialist on congas. The level of playing is so high.

RF: Can you think of any lessons—musically or politically—that you've learned along the way?

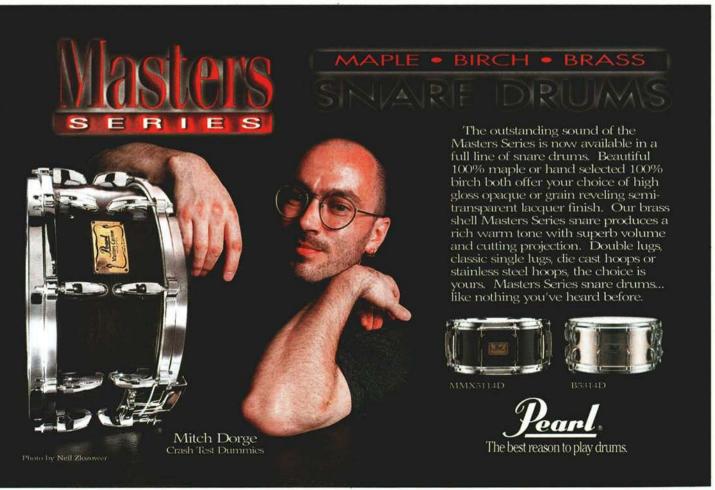
JP: If you get along with people and don't have an attitude, you can make it in the business. But you do have to be a great player. Musicians are a commodity. There are guys who get on the phone and hustle themselves. I couldn't do that, but there's nothing wrong with being a good competitor. You don't have to be malicious or step on anybody's toes while you're blowing your own horn.

One of the first phone calls I made when I arrived was to Jack Elliot, a well-known

composer here in town. I had played in a trio with him in Connecticut in college. When I got to town, I called him and he told me to call the NBC contractor at home. He said, "Tell him you're a friend of mine and that I told you to call." I called the contractor and he said, "Who told you to call me here? Don't ever call me at home again," and he hung up on me. So I said, "Okay, that takes care of that." And I never called another person.

In the old days, the contractors put together the musicians. Today, the composer has his favorites, so he dictates the key players he wants. It helps if you have a name already from recordings or being a part of a big band—whether it be a symphony orchestra, a big band, or a rock band. But if a guy comes to town, he should join one of the answering services these contractors use. If a contractor calls the answering service and some guys are not available, the service may recommend a guy on the service. Get seen, get to know people, and be the best at what you do.





Drumming And Conducting



by Emil Richards

This month's installment of *Tracking* includes an excerpt from my book *Studio Techniques* on conducting. I think every drummer and percussionist will find this fun to try—and good practice. You never know, you just might find yourself in a situation where the band or orchestra will be looking to you "for direction," so this material could be helpful to know.

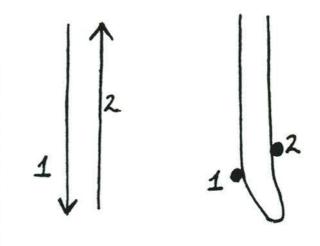
"Conducting" is the direction of a musical performance by means of visible gestures designed to secure uniformity, both of execution and interpretation. It is one of the most difficult yet rewarding musical activities you can do.

In order to understand and appreciate the role of the conductor, every percussionist should take a turn at the podium with the baton. The drummer/percussionist has the advantage of "good

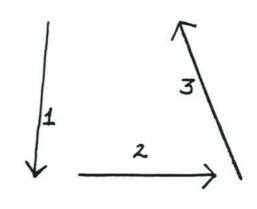
time," which is essential to leading a group or orchestra. For this reason, the percussionist should do well as a conductor.

To begin with, the baton is held lightly in the right hand between the thumb and the first two fingers and controlled by the wrist and forearm. (Our baton will more than likely be the mallet or stick we are holding at the time.) The tip of the baton is maintained at a height that can be seen by all the performers. The basic movements of the stick are vertical and lateral; where there are only one or two beats to the bar, it is vertical only. Here are some of the basic batterns:

2/4Meter



3/4 Meter





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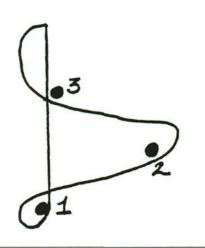
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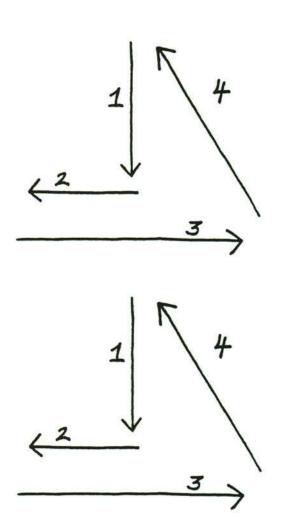


Stephen Perkins: Former Drummer of Jane's Addiction, currently with Porno For Pyros, and HIP Advisory Board Member.

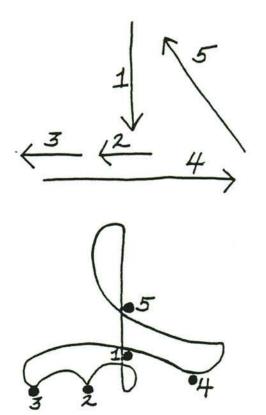
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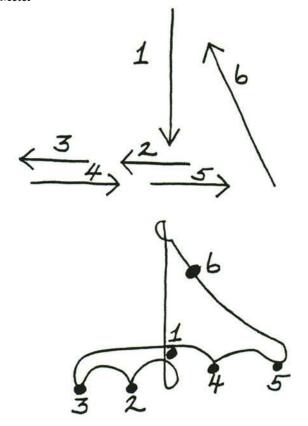
4/4 Meter



5/4 Meter



6/4 Meter



Attempts to show these patterns on paper have often been made but are usually not particularly convincing, since the nature of the motion varies according to circumstances. The underlying principle is that the stick should not move in a series of jerks, but rather in a fluid, continuous movement. It should bounce off each point in the diagram.

The way in which this motion is done varies according to whether the music is slow or fast, legato or staccato, and so on. Where there is only one beat in a bar, the bounce must be considerable in order to reach the point where the next beat begins, such as a fast 3/4 beat played in one.

No initial beat can begin in a vacuum. It has to be preceded by a preliminary beat, which indicates exactly the tempo that follows. If the music begins on the first beat of a bar, the preliminary beat will naturally be an upbeat. If it begins on the second beat, the preliminary beat will naturally be a downbeat.

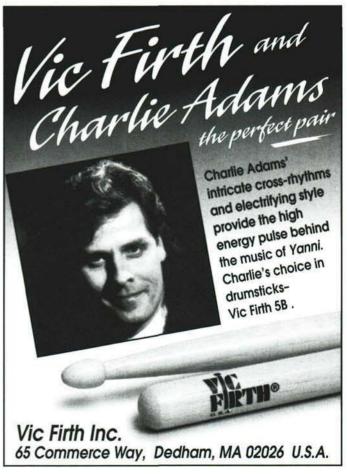
The left hand is normally used to control dynamics—particularly by illustrating crescendo and diminuendo—to shape phrases, and to give leads or warnings to individuals. It is also often used

as a downbeat along with the right hand to signal the change of a "time signature" bar: Whenever a new time signature appears, the conductor can make the change clearer by bringing the left hand down with the right on the downbeat of that new time signature.

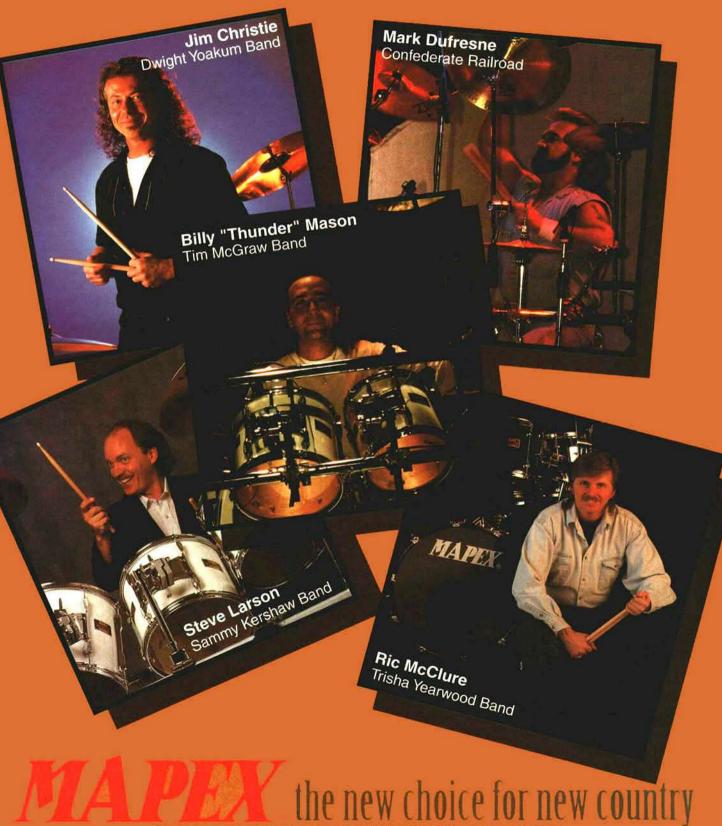
The eyes are as important a means of communication with an orchestra as the stick. They have the power of conveying to individuals a good deal that cannot easily be expressed by gesture. With his eyes, the conductor can indicate leads and remind players of details of interpretation, which have been worked out during rehearsal. In film music, the eyes of the conductor must dart from the score, to the clock, and to the screen to be sure his music is working with the film, as well as cover the above-mentioned duties with the orchestra.

If you ever have the opportunity to conduct a group, take it. It may be something that needs to be done in order to hold the group together—who better to do it than a drummer?





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A Visit To The Drum Doctor

by Rick Van Horn

If you're a producer in the L.A. recording scene and you need top-quality drums for a session, chances are good that you'll rent them from Ross Garfield. If you're a first-call drummer who wants reliable maintenance and cartage of all your kits, you, too, are likely to be calling Ross. If your drums are in need of repair, restoration, or a custom finish.... You guessed it: Ross Garfield. That's why he's called the Drum Doctor.

Over the years Ross has become an essential ingredient in the success of hundreds of recording projects—and of the careers of

dozens of drummers. He started his business strictly as a drum rental and consultant service. "I would rent gear to a session," Ross says, "and if they had a use for me I'd go there myself to help out. As I saw needs arise, I decided to fill those needs. That led to doing cartage for the personal kits of specific drummers. Today, most of my regular clients keep at least two kits with me; some keep as many as ten or twelve."

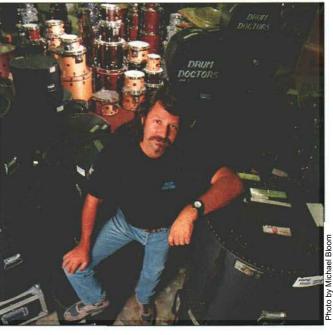
The Doctor's list of clients includes such drummers as Jim Keltner, Terry Bozzio, Mike Baird, Curt Bisquera, Eddie Bayers, Chad Smith, Vinnie Colaiuta, Charlie Drayton, Peter Erskine, Sonny Emory, Josh Freese, Gonzo, Jeff Hamilton,

Gregg Field, Max Weinberg, Steve Jordan, Ricky Lawson, Nick Menza, Jonathan Moffet, and Lars Ulrich. The inclusion of drummers like Menza and Ulrich shows that Ross's services apply to drummers other than those in the "session" scene.

"Nick and Lars are not session players in the classic sense," says Ross, "but they certainly do their recording in a studio, so they need the same kind of services. And there is a certain amount of crossing over that happens. For example, I was working on a John Fogerty record not long ago. John was looking for a real heavy rock thing for one song, and I recommended Nick. With Lars, I was called in to work on the *Metallica* album. We worked together for almost seven months on that record. In that instance it was Lars who called me in, rather than the producer. Metallica has a very strong presence. They know what they're looking for

and they're calling the shots—because they're writing the checks."

The Drum Doctor's North Hollywood warehouse includes complete workshop facilities for the repair and customization of drums. There Ross and his five assistants re-cover drums, cut bearing edges, restore old drums, and build new ones from scratch. "Each of my guys has his own particular strengths," comments Ross, "and we take advantage of that fact to offer specialized services. For example, one guy has become an excellent painter, so we do a lot of refinishing of shells and matching new shells to an existing set."



Before becoming the Drum Doctor, Ross Garfield was himself a professional drummer. "I was playing in a band in Northern California in 1980," Ross relates. "Some friends in the L.A. scene suggested that I come down and take a shot at being a session drummer. So I made the move. I had saved enough money to live-cheaply—for a year while I dedicated my time to finding a band. There were days when I'd rehearse with one band in the afternoon and gig with another that same night. I'm sure a lot of drummers out there can relate to that situation. In 1981 I joined a band that had management and a real buzz among the record labels. I figured we had

it made when Capitol took us in to do some serious demos. But after that they sent us a list of things they wanted to see us change—including the way the lead singer acted on stage. This put him into a tailspin! He talked us into saying screw Capitol—we'd find another label. But the word was out, and no other label was interested. At that point the singer just disappeared."

The band spent three months trying to find another singer and start over again. Ross decided to look for something else. "I wanted a situation where my destiny didn't depend on anybody else," he says. "I'd seen a couple people do cartage and drum teching, and I decided to take a stab at it myself. I'd always had several drumkits around, so I started the business with those kits and a few snare drums that I picked up."

There were other cartage companies in the L.A. area at that

time, but none of them specialized in serving drummers. Having played drums virtually all his life, Ross realized that a drummer's needs are different from those of any other musician. "Drummers have a lot of gear," says Ross, "and every drummer wants his or her drums set up differently. So I figured that a business specializing in drums would be a natural. I had a photographer come over and take pictures for a real professional-looking little brochure—which I sent out to every person in the industry I could get an address for."

Response was slow in coming. In fact, Ross really didn't get much of a break until he happened to see an up-and-coming drummer named Vinnie Colaiuta playing at a jazz club in Encino. Ross showed Vinnie his brochure and told him that if he ever needed rental drums—or someone to take care of his own drums—Ross was available.

"Not long after that," Ross recalls, "I got a frantic phone call from Vinnie. He had a last-minute gig and he couldn't get in touch with his cartage company. I told him I could get a set to

him within an hour. I'll never forget it; it was a Friday night and it was raining like crazy. I jumped in my truck and got the drums down there and loaded in. Basically, I bailed him out. He was able to do his gig, and he was happy with the drums I could provide. The same thing happened a second time, and after that Vinnie decided to leave a couple of his sets with me and just have me do his cartage from then on. This was back in the early '80s. Vinnie was a jingle maniac back then. I can remember when we actually did four sessions in one day."

Ross's success as the Drum Doctor came about because he did more than provide and set up the drums. As he explains,

"Probably the reason the business took off was that I had an ear for tuning drums. When I moved a cartage client or a rental set in I would tune the drums—and they would sound good. That's not just my opinion; producers and engineers would tell me that. So after a while people would pay me to hang around and keep the drums tuned on the session."

Tuning for a session requires both acoustical and political skills. Did Ross tune for the way *he* thought the drums sounded good, for the way he knew the *drummer* liked them, or for the *producer*? "When I first started," he replies, "I got them sounding good to my ear. As I kept on doing it I got to a point where I understood what each drummer was looking for, and I would tune each set accordingly. Drummers like Jim Keltner or Peter Erskine go for completely different tunings than Vinnie Colaiuta or Jeff

Porcaro. But no matter how picky they are themselves, ultimately drummers want the drums tuned so that the producer is happy. The beauty of what I'm able to do is that I can tune the drums and then go into the control room while the drummer is playing and listen to what he or she is doing. So I'm actually tuning first for the drummer and then for the producer and engineer."

Is tuning in the studio all that difficult? Why is it that drummers can't—or don't—do for themselves what Ross does? "Actually," Ross admits, "a lot of drummers *can* do what I do. Sometimes it's just a matter of saving time. In other cases they just appreciate having somebody like me there so they don't *have* to do it. They can concentrate on their playing. Jeff Porcaro was the king of this. He didn't want to sit there and hit quarter notes on the bass drum for half an hour while the engineer dialed in the sound. He figured that if I did that stuff he could either spend more time with his family before coming to the session, or spend more time with the guys on the session getting the vibe going.

"There's another side to it," Ross continues. "A given drummer

might have playing chops; over the years I've developed tuning chops. On a normal day I'll do three or four sessions-in different rooms, on different sets, with different microphone setups, for different producers. I've gotten to a point where I understand what the drums are doing under the mic's. I just go in there and fin I'm not sweating bullets, which a lot of guys do in the studio. Even some of the biggestname drummers can have a problem with the room, or with a picky engineer, or with the drums themselves. A lot of people don't realize that drumheads can sometimes come through with defects. If you don't notice that from the beginning, you can spend half an hour trying to get a



sound out of one tom-tom—and it'll *never* sound great. There's stuff that a person gets to understand by doing it over and over again, and that's what I can offer a drummer over and above his or her own tuning skills."

Sometimes, however, despite Ross's best efforts, something is missing in the sound—or the producer just wants a different sound. How does Ross deal with that problem? "It all depends on the situation," he replies. "There are plenty of times when I'll deliver a set of drums and have another complete set in the truck as a backup. Other times I'll come to a session with three or four bass drums, ten or fifteen snares, and a couple of sets of toms. A lot of it has to do with the scope of the session. Understanding what the producer is going for is a big part of my job. The beauty of where I am now in the industry is that producers now call me

directly about an upcoming session. Peter Anderson, who produces Dwight Yoakam, Michelle Shocked, and several other artists, is a good example. He's had success with one particular kit of mine. So he'll call me and say, 'Bring me my kit.' I know exactly what kit he wants, and I know that there are also five snare drums that *have* to be there for his session."

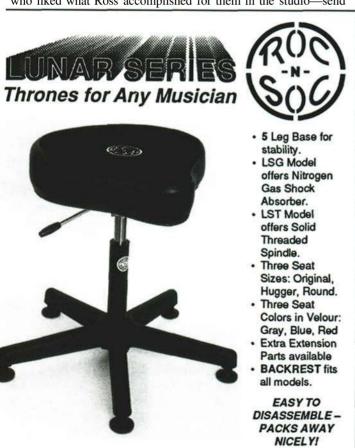
Like any good doctor, Ross is prepared for almost any emergency. His trucks are all outfitted with a parts box for things like an extra snare stand, a seat, cymbal stands, and L-arms for rack-mounted toms. And of course, considering their importance to the sound of a kit, each truck stocks drumheads in a variety of types for all sizes of drums. "At any given time," Ross figures, "I probably have seventy-five heads—along with boxes of sticks, snare units, etc."

Although he works primarily in the L.A. studio scene, the Drum Doctor occasionally makes "house calls." "Every once in a while," says Ross, "someone will call me into a studio out of town. I was flown up to the San Francisco area for Keith Richards' last record. We shipped the drums up a couple of days before. I ship drums to projects all over the country. I have one kit—a 1939 Ludwig set—in Atlanta right now with Stone Temple Pilots. I also have a set in Reno for a Japanese studio project."

The Doctor also frequently doubles as a teacher, when bands—who liked what Ross accomplished for them in the studio—send

their drum techs to him to get a few hints before their tour starts. And once in a while a drummer will insist that the artist bring Ross out on the road—at least to get the tour started. "On the last Neil Young tour Jim Keltner was playing with Booker T. & the MG's as the back-up band. Jim has been my client for ten years, and he convinced Neil to hire me to make sure everything was cool with the drums. Jim wants more than what most people want; he likes to be able to check out whatever is available and decide for himself if it's hip for his scene. On the Neil Young show, for example, he was playing a nice acoustic set and triggering a ddrum brain as well. He wasn't getting enough of it through the monitor system that Neil had, so he brought in a studio P.A. system that I had built—to use as his own monitor system. It wasn't really designed to go on the road, and it was certainly overkill for Jim's situation. But it worked very well for what he needed."

For drummers who can't avail themselves of Ross Garfield's personal service, he offers a CD entitled *The Drum Doctor Does Drums*. It contains over 1,100 acoustic and electronic drum and percussion sounds that Ross created for use by drummers and programmers. The CD came about as a result of the success Ross had had previously creating sounds for Synclavier and Fairlight programmers. "We'd do sample sessions where they'd put a bunch of my sounds onto DAT, a computer, and a tape deck all at





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the same time," says Ross. "Then they'd work with those sounds in their systems. The word got around, and the Alesis company approached me. We did a sample session for their *HR-16* drum machine. That was an incredibly successful unit, based on both the quality of its sounds and its affordability. Then we did the *HR-16B*. I gave the Alesis people some great stuff; we spent some long days just making sounds. I believe some of them are in the *D-4* as well.

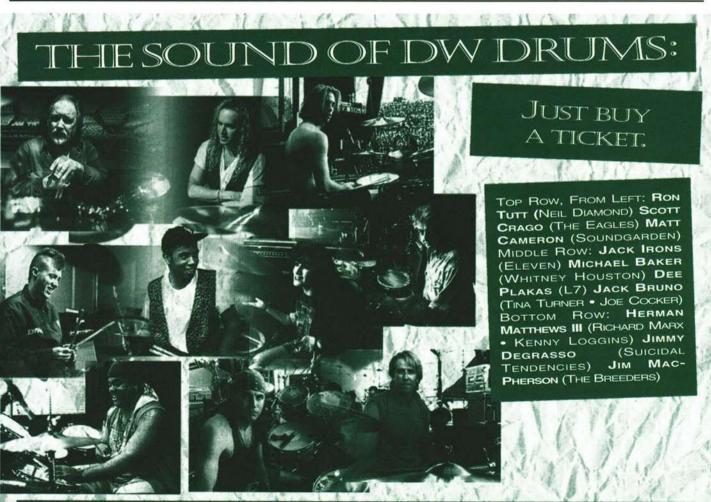
"After that," Ross continues, "the Ensoniq company approached me about doing a set of samples with my name on it. They wanted to put it out as an after-market item that people could use to expand the sound capabilities of their samplers. So we made a set of ten floppy disks about three years ago, and it's still selling really well. So I decided to do one of my own, and I put it out in December of 1993. It's in all the different formats: for Akai, Roland, and Yamaha samplers, for the Synclaviers and the big computers, and as an actual audio CD."

If someone can get the Drum Doctor's sounds on a CD, why do they need to hire the Drum Doctor for their studio project? "I thought about that before I put the CD out," says Ross. "Actually, I think the CD can only help my business. That sampler has a lot of stuff on it, but quite often people will want something customized for their scene. I also find that a lot of the people who use samples in computers and drum machines aren't the same people

who are tracking albums. People may use my CD for demos or as a songwriting tool. But once you get up to the level where people are making records, they're going to want a live drummer there. And that's where my services will be needed."

After working with drummers all day long—and often all night—you might think Ross is no longer interested in doing any drumming himself. But that's not the case. "I still *love* to play," says Ross, emphatically, "and I'd really miss it if I just let it go. But I'm actually playing a lot—every time I do a session and we're getting drum sounds. Obviously there's a lot of just playing quarter notes on the kick, snare, and toms. But then there comes a point when the engineer finally lets me play some time. Sometimes it's just for ten minutes; other times it's for three or four hours. So although I'm not playing quite as much as I used to in bands, it's enough. And it's always a thrill if some of the other musicians on the session play along."

Which brings Ross to a story that he says illustrates one of the high points of what he does. "It was the last Keith Richards record," he begins, "with Steve Jordan on drums and Charlie Drayton on bass. We had been working with an old 26" *Radio King* bass drum. In the middle of the song the engineer decided that this track should be done with a 20" bass drum. So everybody took a break while I changed the bass drum. I put the mic' in the new drum and started playing the drum so that the engineer could



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get a sound. I had been listening to the track, so I played a part similar to what Steve had been doing—in my own way, of course; I was just doodling compared to him. All of a sudden Charlie came out and started playing his bass part. Then Waddy Wachtel, who was also on the session, joined in on guitar. At this point it had gone beyond my just getting sounds for the engineer. Of course I had to try to keep a straight face and not look like I was enjoying it too much so they'd know I was still working. [laughs] But I was really getting off.

"Before long," Ross continues, "Keith came out and plugged in. This went on for a couple of minutes, and then Steve came back in from the kitchen. He looked at me playing the drums and Charlie playing the bass and Waddy and Keith on guitars—and he went over and sat in on the keyboards. At this point we were *jamming*, and it was one of the high points of my life. I grew up in the '60s and '70s, and the Stones were always one of my favorite bands. To be playing with Keith Richards was like a dream come true!"

When asked if the topper for that story might have been for the engineer to put the whole thing on tape and let that be the track, Ross quickly says, "Oh no! I discourage that. That happened once; someone was joking around and the engineer started to say something like that. I immediately put the sticks down. I relish this job too much; I wouldn't want to piss anybody off. Besides, I'm not there to promote myself. As the Drum Doctor, my job is to make the drummer look and sound good."

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William "Cozy" Cole

Cozy Cole, an incredibly adept player, was strongly rooted in the rudimental style, but he contributed much to jazz drumming. One of the first players to develop his own brand of hand and foot coordination, he mastered the technique thoroughly, performing solos more complex than anything that had previously been done. Cole was also known for playing four different rhythmic figures at one time (figures often divided between straight 8ths and triplets), giving the effect of two drummers playing simultaneously. His experimentation with coordinated independence was way ahead of its time, and previewed the bop drumming style of the '40s.

Cole was born in East Orange, New Jersey in 1909, and began drumming at the age of five. Though influenced by Chick Webb, Gene Krupa, and Jo Jones, Cole was initially inspired by Sonny Greer. By 1930, he was recording with Jelly Roll Morton, and shortly thereafter went on to play with Benny Carter, Stuff Smith, and Willie Bryant.

Cole achieved national prominence between 1939 and 1942 in Cab Calloway's band, where he was featured on legendary recordings like "Crescendo In Drums," 'Paradiddle Joe," and "Ratamacue." After the Calloway years, he worked and recorded with Lionel Hampton, Coleman Hawkins, Roy Eldridge, Jonah Jones, and Louis Armstrong's All Stars, and in 1945 he recorded with Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie. Cole also worked on Broadway, and was one of the first black musicians hired as a staff player by CBS radio. During the '50s, his recording of "Topsy, Part 1" was a nationwide hit, one of only a handful of drummer-recorded hits.

Bob Breithaupt, percussion instructor at Capital University in Ohio, recalls Cozy Cole: "What he did between his hi-hat and bass drum were primarily tap dancing things. Then he'd simply play on top of it. But during the '30s, that was pretty significant because *no one* was doing it. His solo techniques were really amazing. He found he could superimpose rhythms on top of one another and get some real interesting sounds. He obviously had some coordination that most people *didn't* have."

Continually working towards personal improvement, Cole later studied snare drum with Billy Gladstone, mallets with Fred Albright, and timpani with Saul Goodman at the Juilliard School. In 1954 he opened a school for drummers with Gene Krupa and built a solid reputation as an instructor, with Philly Joe Jones among his many students. Late in his life, Cole even studied for a music degree at Capital University, one of his lifelong goals. Cozy Cole died in 1981 and remains one of jazz drumming's most important figures.



Eight bars in the style of Cozy Cole:



Excerpted from The Great Jazz Drummers by Ron Spagnardi, published by Modern Drummer Publications.



Samba, Bozzio-Style

by Rob Leytham



One of my all-time favorite drummers is Terry Bozzio. His exploration of the "Drum Ostinato" has taken drumming to new heights of limb independence, solo musicality, and pure excitement. I don't have a student on my schedule who isn't working on

some form of ostinato during his or her lesson time. The ostinato builds up the student's coordination and allows me, the teacher, to be more creative in that development.

This was the case when I was teaching a samba groove to one of my students. He had just purchased the first Bozzio instructional video and wanted to learn some of the ostinatos from it. After explaining a few things about the ostinato, I said, "Why not take the samba pattern that we learned today and play it in sort of a Bozzio style?" He was excited, so I wrote out a few ideas on how I thought Terry Bozzio would play a samba.

Start out slowly, because the patterns that are given will be learned with both the right and left hand leading the ostinato. First, play straight 8th notes on the ride cymbal, with your feet playing the classic samba groove.



Now let's bring your right hand down on the "&s" and strike the floor tom keeping the feet going all the time. (It's very important not to go too fast at first, and remember to count out loud.)



When you have that under control, proceed to the rhythmic solo and play it with your left hand around the drumset.

Once that is mastered, move on to the next pattern. Again we have a basic samba pattern between the ride cymbal and feet.



Now take the 16th-note subdivisions—"e" and "&"—and move those to the floor tom. Play that at a comfortable speed when adding the rhythmic solo with your left hand. It is exciting

when you realize that you are beginning to sound like two different drummers.



Next, take the ostinato and move it over to your left hand and solo with your right. (I do the ostinato between my China and high tom, but you can use any cymbal/tom combination you like.)

It is important to get the ostinato down well enough so that you can put it in the back of your head and concentrate fully on the solo. Have fun with this, and don't get discouraged; it *will* get easier.

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CHRIS BARON

continued from page 33

the case of a rhythm-section player, it's going to be far harder for the dep, and consequently the actors and dancers.

PH: How often are you allowed to put in deps?

CB: It varies. At the beginning of *Miss Saigon* there were very strict rules. There was an exclusive period of about six weeks. There are two other percussionists, and we try not to be all off at the same time. It's quite self-regulating in that respect, so that there aren't problems with management or conductors.

PH: That must mean that the three of you get on well?

CB: That's really important, to get on well with everyone around you.

PH: Do musicians in your show manage to combine holding down their job with going off on orchestral or pop tours?

CB: Yes, sure. Chris Hind, one of the other percussionists, is often away, playing early music, baroque timps. The time-off business is discretionary with the management. It's easier in a long-running show. The first year of *Miss Saigon* was really quite restricted. We have associate deps, people who've done the show a certain number of times and are approved by the conductor.

PH: Of all the shows you've done, which have you most enjoyed?

CB: I enjoyed *Kiss Of The Spider Woman* because I had to go in and sight-read it. I enjoyed the challenge.

PH: Why did you have to sight-read it?

CB: I think it's probably wisest to say that someone was ill! Gareth Valentine, who now conducts *Miss Saigon*, was conducting. Because I was helping them out, it was fantastic, as if I couldn't do anything wrong. The conductor was so helpful, and so much on my side, that it made it much easier. Sometimes if you go in and dep, you feel like you're going into the ring and fighting a little battle.

PH: It's a great drum part in that show. Graham Ward played it beautifully.

CB: Definitely...some great Latin parts, also playing along with a sequencer. That was fun because you didn't have to worry, "Is this the right tempo?" You could just play. I also enjoyed *Guys And Dolls* at the Prince of Wales theater. That was a good blow with the big band. Also *Follies*—beautiful Sondheim score arranged by Jonathan Tunick.

PH: When you rehearse shows, do you have much contact with the composers and arrangers?

CB: On Follies Jonathan Tunick was there, helping out with queries. He advised me on quick changes, for example from kit to timpani. He was available, but not much had to be changed because the arrangements were so good! On Miss Saigon, the arrangements and parts were changed from rehearsal to rehearsal with the composer, the arranger, the musical supervisor, the conductor, and the wardrobe mistress making changes to the percussion part every half-hour! That was very difficult because we had so much equipment and we were trying to work out who would play what before we had a setup designed. It was loads of gongs, electronics, timps, and little bits and pieces.

PH: Did you feel creatively involved?

CB: We had to be very flexible, willing to try out all sorts of things, and we prepared to have the next number ready to play while rehearsing the previous one.

PH: You mentioned electronics. Could you let us know what you use in *Miss Saigon?*

CB: I use ddrums. When the show first started we had an acoustic kit in there, but to contain the sound they wanted me to use electronics, because they didn't want to screen us off. By using electronic drums and acoustic cymbals they got what they wanted. Originally we had a sampler with an *Octapad*, but now we've got ddrums. They're superb, I love using them.

I've just bought some new ones for recording work. I wouldn't dream of using them on a jazz gig or something, but they're perfect for a situation where you're required to play electronic drums.

PH: In *Miss Saigon*, there's a big march, "The Fall Of Saigon," which presumably you used to play on a real snare drum?

CB: Before I got the ddrum I used to play it on an orchestral snare. I have to make very little allowance for the difference. [Throughout Miss Saigon Chris constantly changes the settings to obtain different drum sounds to fit the style of the music.] It has very fast triggering and a wide dynamic range—not as good as the real thing, but not far off. And we have a malletKAT for MIDI control of the tuned instruments, and a Roland Octapad linked up to a sampler, with some sounds like Odaiko—which are big Japanese drums that we don't have room for—and boobams and tubaphone.

BARRY DE SOUZA

PH: So when the show was being put together, whose knowledge of all these per-

together, whose knowledge of all these percussion instruments was drawn upon?

CB: Before we got into full rehearsal, Bill Brohn, the arranger, came over from New York with photographs while we were trying out some of the arrangements.

PH: Photographs of?

CB: He'd been to see someone who specialized in all these ethnic instruments, and he came over with lots of photos and names. A lot of these instruments had more than one name, so the photos helped us assemble all the oriental instruments. [Much of the Far Eastern atmosphere of Miss Saigon is created with a multitude of ethnic percussion effects.]

PH: How involved do composers get with these kinds of processes?

CB: There are differences. Whenever Claude-Michael Schonberg [composer of *Miss Saigon*] was in the building during rehearsals for *Miss Saigon*, he'd get totally involved in everything that was going on, saying I don't like this, I don't like that.

PH: So he wouldn't go through the musical director?

CB: Sometimes he'd walk straight up to you and pick up your delicate, expensive timp mallet and hit it as hard as he could against the tam-tam to see if that was the sound he wanted. Like a kid in a toy shop, he wanted to do everything and try everything out and experiment.

PH: How about Sondheim?

CB: You wouldn't even know he was there. He'd be sitting at the back of the auditorium quietly, and if he'd have something to say the conductor would be asked to tell you.

PH: Finally, how would you advise a young person who wanted to get started in the business?

CB: It's difficult, isn't it? You need to be known. Being proficient in reading and playing goes without saying.

PH: Are you saying that you need to be into just playing, and the work comes along almost by accident?

CB: I haven't aimed at getting into shows. I've just gone where the phone calls have taken me. To send resumes is okay for a start, but personal introductions and recommendations are best. They come through playing, being with other musicians, and working with other musicians. Then you'll get proposed and suggested for things. I think that does people more good than any amount of self-promotion.

out, as long as it's not over the top. It certainly wakes everyone up!

PH: You've done *Cats* for ten years. Some people would find it hard to conceive of doing a show for that long. It would be interesting to find out from you how the feel of the show has changed over the years. Do musicians come and go?

BDS: Occasionally. But a lot of them have been there from the beginning—fourteen years. Every so often new musical directors come in and change tempos, but after a while it seems to go back to where it was.

PH: *Cats* is famous for its dancing. What are the responsibilities of a drummer playing for dancers?

BDS: Just to keep steady tempos for them.

PH: Can you see the dancers from where you are, do you have to watch them?

BDS: No, that's the trouble. Where we are, we're screened off from the stage, so we've just got the musical director, who's got a TV screen. I'm afraid I've never seen the show! [laughs embarassedly]

PH: Can you hear everything okay? Do you have monitors?

BDS: I hear what I want to hear. I haven't got a monitor. The m.d.'s got the vocals in his monitor. When I first started I was in a booth because there was lots of spill, but now I'm in the open and the percussionist's in the booth. We've swapped over, and the rest of the band think it's much better.

PH: Does that mean that you've started playing quieter over the years?

BDS: I was starting to, but recently the big bosses have been coming in and saying they want it loud again.

PH: You must have been popular among the other musicians, because it seems that a lot of the time non-rhythm-section players in shows complain about the volume from the rhythm section.

BDS: I have had some loud deps, and the players tell me off when I go back in after them!

PH: You've worked with a lot of percussionists, deps coming in and so on. From your vantage point, what would you say are the key elements in depping successfully?

BDS: It's not a problem as long as they listen to what's going on and try to blend in. Occasionally people will bash around and start racing away, which spoils things. The time feel's very important. I feel that as



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PH: What's your favorite aspect of playing *Cats?*

BDS: It's the variety. One moment you're playing a rock thing, then a big-band number, then a waltz or Scottish dance. There's also a funk number.

PH: Do you reflect positively on your years in *Cats*, or do you look upon it as a necessary evil to make a living?

BDS: I've always enjoyed it. People sometimes say, "How can you take it?" I like my time off, but I always look forward to going back in to do the show.

PH: Do you still enjoy playing?

BDS: Yes I do. I feel I'm playing better now than ever, I feel better in myself. My chops are better. When I was doing all that work in the studios, there was a lot of stopping and starting. In *Cats* it's two and a half hours of nonstop playing, so it really builds up the chops.



JULIAN FAIRBANK

continued from page 35

the next job I did. That presumably makes the contractor think, "He's doing a good job," and it all contributes to a good reputation—we hope!

PH: I'd like to ask you about your equipment.

JF: Oh no...here we go! All beaten-up gear! [laughs]

PH: What do you play in *Sunset Boulevard?*

JF: Drumset, a pair of timps, glock, tamtam, bongos, orchestral bass drum, and toys.

PH: Do show players provide their own instruments, or are they hired by the management?

JF: I provide the equipment in this case, but it does vary quite a bit. I think it's unreasonable to expect a percussionist to put a huge amount of gear into a show, without any compensation. As far as I know, they don't ring keyboard players and say, "You will need the following instruments, which you must go out and buy and put into the show forever." And it doesn't mean you have to have a second set of gear, for outside work. If there's a lot of stuff, or it's unusual instruments, I always try to push the producers to hire the gear.

PH: Could you tell us about any shows you've enjoyed playing, and for what reasons?

JF: There's two that stand out. *The Pirates Of Penzance*—the Broadway version with new arrangements—was my first show, and it was a great show to play. I was playing the timp part, which was pretty difficult but very satisfying once you got it under your belt. And it was socially good—a

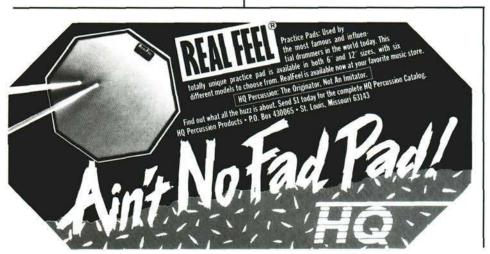
young band, and three percussionists, which was nice. And probably Miss Saigon because, again, it was socially nice and it was a challenge. I never got to the point in that show where I could switch off. It was a good work-out playing-wise, which meant that it went by quicker than some other shows. For instance, at Les Miserables, what there was to play was nice, but there were some long gaps and I got fed up fairly quickly, even though I liked the show. Sunset Boulevard is very much the kind of part that I like in that there'll be a big-band number-which is nice to play—then there's another number, which has a very up-front timp part with some tricky pedaling. You'd normally play that on three drums if you could get them in the pit. Those are two things I like, so I feel it's up my street.

PH: In the years that you've been working as a professional musician, do you feel that West End shows have become more important in the life of musicians in London?

JF: They have. It was already happening when I started. A lot of people then still regarded a show as a last resort if you weren't getting enough work orchestrally or session-wise. It was already changing then, but now we've gotten to the point where the lines are really blurred and a lot of people are both session and theater players. There's not enough work and inevitably the standard's gone up and there's more competition. Also, when I started shows I remember one of the early contractors I worked for had two books of players, one for sessions and one for shows. I think those days are gone now.

PH: How do you cope with playing the same show many times?

JF: Certainly from a mental point of view it's good to do it on a day-to-day basis and not think about the fact that you might be doing the same thing in a year, and of the total number of shows that are going to take place. It's a bit like giving up smoking. You don't think, "I'm never going to smoke again." What I do try is to put my energy into keeping the standard up—or even improving it.



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Frank Capp Drummer And Contractor

by Woody Thompson

Frank Capp is a man short on name recognition but long on accomplishment and influence. As a player with an extensive list of prestige gigs (Sinatra, Stan Kenton, Peggy Lee, Nancy Wilson, and Andre Previn, for starters) and as a businessman who has, for many years, acted as a link between players and producers in the high-pressure L.A. recording scene, Capp has earned the right to be called an important man

Capp got his professional start at age nineteen when he joined Stan Kenton's big band. This auspicious beginning was followed by a career as one of the hardestworking studio players in Los Angeles and as a drummer sought after by some of the world's biggest singing stars and bandleaders—accomplishments that have almost been eclipsed by his success as a musical contractor. As a man who is often called upon to pair musicians with recording dates, Capp can be regarded as a powerful ("I prefer to think of it as 'popular," he says) presence in the world of recorded music

As if that weren't enough, he also has led his own big band for seventeen years and continues to be active as a live player. Capp's career has been characterized by hard work, an ability to find his place in a shifting and sometimes fickle music scene, and a devotion to playing his instrument that has not diminished with the years. Perhaps most importantly, when responsibility has called, Frank Capp has always been there to accept it.

WT: How did you get started in drumming?

FC: I grew up in Worcester, Massachusetts. My uncles worked at Walberg & Auge, a percussion accessory manufactu-

er. One of them brought a pair of drumsticks home to me when I was four or five years old. I started banging on the furniture with the sticks and I ultimately became a drummer. I'm sixty-one years old now and I've been playing all my life.

WT: Who were your drum heroes?

FC: When I was a kid I listened to people like Papa Jo Jones and Buddy Rich. I have a set of Buddy's *Radio King* drums that I'm very proud of. I used to listen to—but not

pattern myself after—guys like Sonny Greer. The big band drummers were the guys who were around when I was young. Gene Krupa, Papa Jo, Buddy—those were my idols, like the kids of today look up to Dave Weckl and Vinnie Colaiuta. It was a whole different era—but just as important.

WT: Did you ever have formal musical training?

FC: I went to Boston University, but I didn't major in percussion or performance; I majored in music education, because I thought I was going to be a teacher. I used to write but I gave that up because I was so slow. I wrote a chart for Stan Kenton's band once, and I wrote a couple of things when I was with Neil Hefti. But I can't say that I'm an arranger or writer.

WT: You got your first taste of professional drumming with Stan Kenton's band. Where did your career take you after that? FC: After I left Kenton I went with the Neil Hefti/Frances Wayne band for about



eight months. This was in the early 1950s; it was at the tail end of the days of traveling big bands. When that band broke up I went back home and had my own quartet at a club called The Moors in Shrewsbury, Massachusetts. Then I went down to New York and ran into Pete Candoli, who asked me if I wanted to go out with Peggy Lee. I worked with Peggy for several years. That gig ultimately brought me to California in late 1953.

When I first got here, Remo Belli was drumming for the Billy May band. He would go out on the road and I would stay in his garage apartment. But then he and Roy Harte got together and started their Drum City store. Remo didn't want to go back out on the road, so he got me on the Billy May band. When I came back to L.A. I was free-lancing and working at strip joints. Meanwhile, Remo had taken a gig with Betty Hutton because she would only go out for a couple of weeks at a time. But

he was also starting to mess around with plastic heads along with a chemical engineer named Sam Muchnick. So he got me the gig with Betty.

WT: Did you ever get involved with Remo in the head business?

FC: No, but at one point in the late '50s Bob Yeager, Tommy Sheppard, and I tried to develop plastic drumsticks. There were unbreakable sticks on the market but they weren't good: They didn't feel right. We wanted to incorporate the wood feel and still make an unbreakable drumstick. We got together with Sam Muchnick and invested a few thousand dollars each. Sam made a few pairs of sticks out of Kevlar. They felt pretty good-but we couldn't come up with a way to mass-produce them without spending hundreds of thousands of dollars for special machinery. I have a couple of those sticks as mementos to remind me of our folly.

WT: How did you get into the studios?

FC: I got into the studios through Andre Previn. I was working at the Sahara in Vegas with Dorothy Dandridge. Andre was working in the lounge and we'd hang out together.

In those days every studio in Los Angeles had its own contract orchestra. That means that they had between sixty and seventy-five musicians who had signed contracts to play for the studio. At the time I got back to L.A. from Vegas, someone had just retired from the Warner Brothers orchestra. Andre called Ray Heindorff—who was the conductor of the orchestra—and said, "I've got a drummer for you."

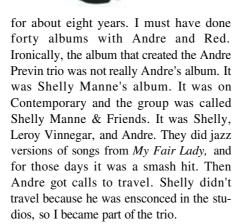
Being in a contract orchestra meant that when the studio had a picture going, you had to be there. You could free-lance too, but even if you had a record date planned for the next day, if they suddenly called you, you had to dump that record date. We were salaried; I think we were making around nine or ten thousand a year. That wasn't a lot of money, but it was a hell of a lot more than everybody else was getting. The studio would send us a check each week-even though we would sometimes go three or four weeks without doing a call. I worked on contract for Warner Brothers for two years. But by 1958 contract orchestras no longer existed; the scene became all

free-lance. So I started free-lancing. I did all of Andre Previn's pictures, including *My Fair Lady, The Apartment,* and *The Old Man And The Sea*—which was scored by Dmitri Tiomkin.

WT: You've had a long association with Andre Previn.

FC: I worked with Andre—and Red Mitchell—as part of the Andre Previn trio

"Ninety percent of the players out here are good musicians who can do almost anything; there might be ten percent getting along on bullshit."



WT: Did you work in television as well as movies?

FC: In one period of time I had Green Acres, the Joey Bishop Show, and the Steve Allen Show—and they were showin g reruns of the Pat Boone Show, which I was also on. The Steve Allen Showwas taped; we'd go in two days a week and tape six shows. The Joey Bishop Show was done live. I'd do whatever TV film shows-dramatic shows—that I could squeeze in between; I'd be on the soundtrack. I also did damn near everything that came out of Hanna-Barbera: The Flintstones and The Jetsons and all those. I don't even know what all I played on because I was too busy working to watch TV. But if you were watching TV during the '60s, you were hearing a lot of me.

WT: What was it that made you so indemand for this type of work?

FC: Well, of course reading was never a problem for me. But I think it was mainly just a strong desire to do it. It was what I wanted to do, and when I want to do something I just go after it and get it. I don't sit back and wait for it to come to me.

WT: With as many years in the studio as you have to your credit, you must have been called on to do rock music at some time in your career.

FC: There's another side of me that I don't talk about much—because I don't like to talk about it. I played on all of Phil Specter's productions—but not drumset; Hal Blaine and Earl Palmer did that. I played percussion on all that stuff—like the tambourine parts. I also invented a sound for Phil Spector using a castanet board. I'd play triplets on those to get a clackety-clackety-clack that would sound like a herd of wild horses. Phil liked that stuff! I played on the Righteous Brothers stuff and on all the Beach Boys stuff too.

The only thing I can say I played drums on was "I Got You Babe," by Sonny and Cher. And you know what I played? Boom, boom-boom, bam—with the backbeat on the snare and floor tom together. To me that was tantamount to getting some kid off the street and saying, "Here, do this." This was in the era of the garage band. Little Johnny down the street got a guitar for Christmas and Tommy next door has got a set of drums. They get in the garage and bang around and then two weeks later

they're recording.

WT: Through all this were you continuing to play what you considered "good" music? FC: Absolutely. I did all that early rock stuff as a way of getting financial security. I would go into the studio and make whatever scale was for that time—say, \$400 a day. Then that night I'd go over to Dante's and work from 8:00 until 1:00 for \$30 playing jazz. That's what I liked doing most.

WT: Considering the amount of work you've done it's surprising that you're not a well-known name among drummers.

FC: The thing is, I got buried in the studios. After I came to California in 1953 I did nothing but play drums for a living until around 1980. By that time all the studio gigs were being given to drummers who played rock or had electronic drums. I wanted to stay in the music business—I didn't want to start selling insurance—so I started contracting for a lot of the leaders I worked for.

WT: How did you get into contracting? FC: When I was playing for Pat Boone in the '60s we did a show for Filmways, and

Pat said that we needed a contractor. Pat's manager asked if I wanted to contract the show and I said sure. So I hired the rest of the musicians and I played drums.

I never stopped being a serious drummer. I did contracting mainly because it increased my financial position. Most jazz drummers wonder where their next meal is coming from; contracting gave me a little bit of security.

WT: In the ensuing years, you've become known as one of the most successful contractors in Los Angeles. What exactly does a contractor do?

FC: The contractor hires the musicians for a recording session, whether it be a motion picture, a television show, or a commercial jingle. Contractors work hand-in-hand with composers to pick the right musicians for the music. Before the session starts, the contractor must make sure that everything is legally correct with the production company—in terms of contracts and so on. After the session starts the contractor also has to see that union rules are adhered to. So the contractor is responsible to every-

body: the musicians, the producer, the composer, and the union.

WT: What criteria do you use in picking musicians for a session?

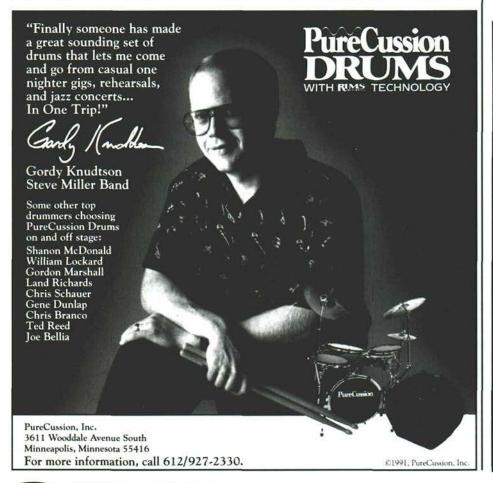
FC: The criteria are different for each date because each date is different. I like to find musicians who are talented on their instruments and who have experience. It goes without saying that they must be good readers. You're gonna go in and sight-read stuff you've never seen before—and you have to play it like you wrote it.

One place I can start is with musicians who the composer asks for specifically. For example, I'm doing a picture soon for Lee Holdridge. He wouldn't ask for somebody who couldn't play well. On the other hand, occasionally I'll suggest someone else if I know that the composer's choice isn't strong in the style that the session calls for. But really, ninety percent of the players out here are good musicians who can do almost anything; there might be ten percent getting along on bullshit.

WT: Do you also play on dates that you've contracted?

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FC: I can be a non-playing contractor or a playing contractor; I've done both. For example, I'm the orchestra manager for the Glendale Symphony Orchestra. Two weeks ago we did a pops concert with Rosemary Clooney. She needed a drummer because her music is pop-oriented, so I played. Usually, though, I feel that a contractor cannot do his best in either area when he has to split himself. A contractor needs to know what's going on in the booth with the producers as well as what's happening outside. If I'm playing, I'm thinking about reading the part or concentrating on the brass figures or trying to get the right sound on the drums. I can't be thinking about, Oh, the producer wants to redo this particular take. The contractor has a lot of responsibility above and beyond the musical aspects of the date. So if it's a big date, I usually choose not to play. If it's a small date where there aren't likely to be any problems then I'll play and contract.

WT: What is it about your playing that has kept you in demand all these years?

FC: The kind of music I play best is straight-ahead, mainstream jazz. I have nowhere near the technique that guys like Vinnie Colaiuta, Dave Weckl, and nine million other young whippersnappers have. But when I play, I have a feeling. There's a good band out here in L.A.—a hot band with a lot of good, modern charts. I would give my eyeteeth to have their drummer's chops and technique. He plays all the tricky things, and he tunes his drums the way the young drummers do now-with that flat sound. Well, I played with that band and the lead trumpet player came over and said, "You know, this is the first time the band really felt good. It was easy to play." It was because I didn't do all the stuff that this kid did. I'm making music, not making like a drum solo.

WT: At sixty-one are you still an active player?

FC: I'm still *very* active. I was with Sinatra for a short while just three years ago. I took Sol Gubin's place until heart surgery knocked me off the road. My

band, Juggernaut, has been around for seventeen years; it's a sixteen-piece group, like the Count Basie Band. We do festivals like the Playboy Jazz Festival, the Mt. Hood Festival, and the Monterey Festival. We have a lot of Basie and Woody Herman charts in our book. In fact, Woody Herman used to hire Juggernaut to do holiday shows with him when his own band was off. Just last week we did a series of performances at various places around L.A. I also have a small group with Ricky Woodard on tenor, Tom Ranier on piano, and Chuck Berghoffer on bass.

Playing drums is my main love. I'm trying to taper off my payroll business because I don't need to do that anymore. What I want to do now is to play. I came in swinging and that's how I want to go out. As long as I can still play good time and musicians still want to work with me and I still get a pat on the back from them from time to time, I will still play my drums.

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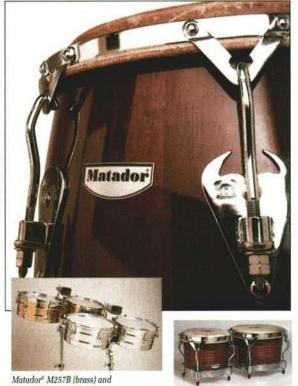
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The Avedis Zildjian Cymbal Company is one of several musical instrument manufacturers supporting Anheuser-Busch's In-Concert band sponsorship program. The program, introduced in July of 1991, spans over forty-five cities and includes seventy-one artists in virtually every musical genre. The program provides promotion, advertising, equipment endorsements and other support to local artists that might otherwise not be heard. Michael Morse, Zildjian's director of marketing, says that the company is "proud of our part in the heritage of popular American music. And we're pleased to share our support for emerging talent with Anheuser-Busch and the In-Concert program—another part of American cultural history." For information about the In-Concert program or any of the artists involved, contact Kaia Roewade in Public Relations at Entertainment Marketing, Inc., tel: (312) 644-0600, fax:(312)644-0698.

Coming Events

The All One Tribe Fall Drumming Workshop Series presents drumming events to coincide with the Fall Arts Festival in Taos, New Mexico. Drumming and dance performances, workshops, seminars, and drum circles focusing on the personal and spiritual nature of rhythm and drums will be conducted by a number of well-known leaders, including Arthur Hull, Beverly Botsford, Mamady Keita, Mabiba Baegne, and Fred Simpson. Events will take place in both Taos and Santa Fe, New Mexico, beginning September 17 and running through September 23. For specific schedules and costs, call (505) 751-5060 (for Taos events) or (505) 982-3516 (for Santa Fe events).

The first European Sonor/Zildjian Drum Camp will be conducted from October 16 through October 22 in Otzenhausen, Germany. The camp is slated to feature teachers from some of the most renowned music universities in the world, along with such luminaries as Ed Soph, Steve Houghton, Gary Chaffee, Gregg Bissonette, and Steve Smith. The seminar is organized by the Modern Drum School, which has twelve branches in Germany, Switzerland, and Austria and works as the official preparatory school (for German-language countries) for P.I.T. in Los Angeles. The camp is outlined for beginners to advanced students, who will be taught in different groups. Lessons will take place over each whole day. On October 18 a concert with all the teachers and a big band is scheduled and will be open to the public as Zildjian Day in Otzenhausen. Further information and application forms may be obtained through Modern Drum School, Postfach 122762, 55719 Idar-Oberstein, Germany, tel: 0049-6781-41170, fax: 0049-6781-41415.

Internationally acclaimed percussionist and composer Max Roach will be honored at Bloomfield College's 125th Anniversary Gala Benefit set for November 5, 1994 at the

Sheraton Meadowlands Hotel in East Rutherford, New Jersey. Entitled "MAXimum Dreams," the gala has attracted a stellar group of artists, educators, and community leaders to serve on the Honorary Committee. Roach will give a forty-five-minute concert at the Gala, which is a fund-raising event to help Bloomfield College keep its doors open to motivated students regardless of their ability to pay. Tickets are available in three categories: Valedictorians (\$500), Salutatorians (\$300), and Scholars (\$150). The evening will begin at 7:00 P.M. with cocktails; dinner and dancing to the Duke Ellington orchestra (led by Mercer Ellington) will follow Max Roach's concert. For more information, call Paula Craig at (201) 748-9000 ext. 294.

Sabian's El Sabor Voted #1 In Music Maker Poll

The readers of *Making Music*, the UK's biggest music publication, have voted Canadian cymbal makers Sabian Ltd. into the #1 spot on the magazine's annual Readers Poll. In the category of Best New Cymbals, Sabian's *El Sabor*—a tripurpose bell/crash/ride model originally created for Latin-style drummers and percussionists—garnered the most votes. The cymbal was noted in the polling for its innovative concept and musical versatility.



Endorser News

George Perelli (Michael McDonald, Bobby Caldwell), **Bryan Hitt** (REO Speedwagon), and **Bob Fernandez** (Barry Manilow) are using Trigger Perfect electronic triggers.

New Vater endorsers include **Tom McWilliams** (Jon Secada), **Gary Wallis** (Pink Floyd), **Terry Thomas**, (Screamin' Cheetah Wheelies), **Jon Wackerman** (Lindsay Buckingham), and **Sean Kinney** (Alice In Chains).

New members of the Kaman Percussion Team using Gibraltar hardware are Phil Collins, Ricky Lawson, Carl Palmer, Kevin Ricard (Kenny Loggins), Philip Bailey (Earth, Wind & Fire), and Charly Alberti (Soda Stereo). Using both Gibraltar hardware and Toca Percussion are Larry Bunker (L.A. Studio), Sheila E., Pete Escovedo, Sr., Juan Escovedo (Hammer, En Vogue), Steve Forman, Ralph Johnson (EW&F), Maurice White (EW&F), Peter Michael (Mariah Carey, George Michael), Chuck Silverman, Julie Spencer, Johnny Almendra (Mongo Santamaria, Tito Puente), and David Romero (Vikki Carr, Toshiko Akiyoshi/Lew Tabackin Big Band).

British tour and session drummer **Russell Gilbrook** endorses Meinl cymbals.

David Rokeach is now a Yamaha endorser.

Drum Workshop welcomes jazz drummer and bandleader **Carl Allen** as an artist endorser.

Tommy Lee (Motley Crue), Jimmy DeGrasso (Suicidal Tendencies), Rick Allen (Def Leppard), Bobby Rock (Nelson), John Molo (Bruce Hornsby), Michael Baker (Whitney Houston), Keith Knudsen (Doobie Brothers), Gordy Knudtson (Steve Miller), David Lauser (Sammy Hagar/Alliance), Jason Paterson (Cry Of Love), Brad Roberts (GWAR), and Del Gray are endorsing Aquarian Drumheads.

Ted Parsons (Prong), is also endorsing Aquarian heads, as well as Rhythm Tech percussion.

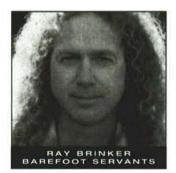
Other Rhythm Tech artists include **Deen Castronovo** (Paul Rogers), **Tris Imboden** (Chicago), **Terry Santiel** (Janet Jackson), **Alvino Bennett** (Kenny Loggins), **Mauro Refosco** (David Byrne), **Bill Rieflin** (Ministry), **Carl Small** (Dr. Dre), **Bryan Owings** (Delbert McClinton), **George Rains** (Jimmy Vaughn), **Rod Bland** (Bobby Blue Bland), **Tom Ardolino** (**NRBQ**), **Candice Pacheco** (D'Cuckoo), **Benjamin Reid** (Derek St. Holmes), **Tom Alvardo** (Frankie Valli), **Peter Turre** (Ray Charles), **Jake Jacobs** (L.A. Raiders band), **Robin Lobe** (Studio Artist), **Orestes Vilato** (Santana, Studio Artist), and the **Crossmen Drum & Bugle Corps.**

Regal Tip drumstick endorsers now include independent per-

cussionists Taku Hirano, Brian Melick, and Bobby DeLuna, along with drummers Aldo Mazza (Repercussion), Jose Rossy (Patti LaBelle), Robin DiMaggio (Mariah Carey, Soul II Soul), Tom Brechtlein (Robben Ford), Frank Briggs (Atlantic Starr) Larry Bright, Carlie Cooley (Manteca), Vikki Foxx (Vince Neil), Winard Harper (Harper Bros.), Jerry Macchia, Karl Ney (Guardian), Dee Plakas (L7), Gary Novak (Chick Corea), and John Stanier (Helmet).

New artists added to Zildjian's roster of cymbal endorsers are Thelonius Monk, Jr., Steve Bowman (Counting Crows), Larry Bright, Sim Cain (Rollins Band), Malcolm Travis (Sugar), Mick Fleetwood (Fleetwood Mac), Glen Graham (Blind Melon), Brad Wilk (Rage Against The Machine), Steven Earle (Afghan Whigs), Frank Wright (Green Day), Johnny Kick (Madder Rose), Gene Houston (Pam Tillis), and Clarence Penn (Stanley Clarke). Drummers using Zildjian drumsticks now include John Riley, Jimmy DeGrasso, Fergal Lawler (the Cranberries), Bill Berry (REM), and Matt Frenette (Loverboy). Drumstick and cymbal endorsers include Levon Helm and Randy Ciarlante (the Band), Kevin Hayes (Robert Cray band), Jim MacPherson (the Breeders), Jerry Augustyniak (10,000 Maniacs), Frank Waddy (George Clinton), Chris Worley (Jackyl), and Dan McCarroll (the Grays).

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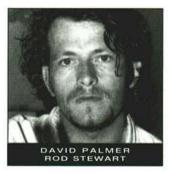
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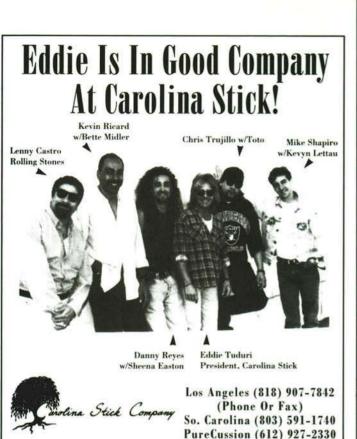
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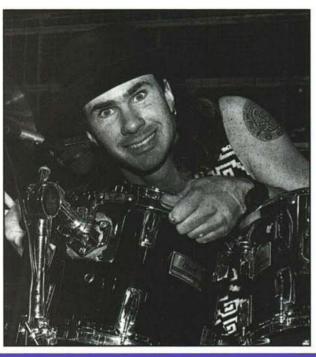
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